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(54) Title: **BIOPOLYMER THICKENER**

(57) Abstract: A novel strain of *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* ("Ropy 352") has been identified and isolated. Ropy 352 produces a previously unknown exopolysaccharide (EPS 352) that when expressed in or added to milk, imparts highly desirable sensory characteristics to the milk, including making the milk very thick, with a very smooth mouth-feel, and slightly sweet with an obvious "chewable-bite".



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BIOPOLYMER THICKENER

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This invention was made in part with government support under The
5 National Dairy Promotion and Research Board (i.e. Dairy Management Inc., DMI)
and USDA/CSREES Special Research Grant. Accordingly the government has
certain rights in this invention.

FIELD OF INVENTION

10 The field of the invention relates to biopolymers, enzymes that are contained
within biopolymer synthesis pathways, nucleic acid sequences encoding such
enzymes, and to organisms that make such biopolymers, wherein such biopolymers
may be used to thicken liquids including liquid foods, as well as an additive to
pharmaceuticals, beauty products, and coating agents.

15

BACKGROUND

Microbial polysaccharides are used for a broad variety of industrial
applications including food production, chemical production (e.g., detergents,
cosmetics, paints, pesticides, fertilizers, flocculants, film formers, lubricants and
20 explosives), pharmaceutical production and waste treatment. In food production,
microbial polysaccharides are commonly used as thickening, gelling and
homogenizing agents. When added to a liquid, microbial biopolymers contribute to
viscosity, emulsion stabilization, surface tension and adhesiveness. Thickening
applications are particularly important in the production of solid and semi-solid food
25 products including dairy and non-dairy foods such as yogurt, buttermilk, salad
dressings, cheese, and ice-cream. Thickening of liquid foods is desirable because of
consumer preference for such thickened foods, which have a characteristic texture
and "mouth feel." Thickening of liquid drinks is also desirable for use with elderly
people who frequently have problems swallowing low-viscosity liquids (e.g., milk
30 and fruit juices) due to an impaired swallowing reflex. The addition of thickener to
such drinks facilitates swallowing and reduces aspiration of liquid into the trachea.

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Currently the only microbial polysaccharides used to any appreciable extent in industry are dextran, produced by *Leuconostoc mesenteroides*, xanthan gum, produced by *Xanthomonas campestris*, and gellan gum, produced by *Aureomonas elodea* ATCC31461 (Crescenzi, *Biotech. Prog.* 11:251-259, 1995). Xanthan gum was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in foods in 1969. Today it is used in many foods such as bakery fillings, canned foods, frozen foods, pourable dressings, sauces, gravies, processed cheeses, and juice drinks. Xanthan gum is also used in oil recovery, pharmaceuticals, beauty products, and coating agents.

Unfortunately, *Xanthomonas campestris* is a less than ideal source of polysaccharides for use in food production, since it is known to be pathogenic, and the biopolymer it produces has long been suspected of being pyrogenic (fever-inducing). Although xanthan gum is classified as "Generally Regarded as Safe" (GRAS) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), *Xanthomonas campestris* is not.

Lactic acid bacteria (LAB) are classified GRAS, and have been used for centuries in fermented dairy products such as yogurt, cheese, and sour-cream. A characteristic of some LAB in food production processes is their production of exopolysaccharides (EPS). EPS provide improved viscosity and mouth-feel while also preventing syneresis (separation) in fermented food products. Despite their ability to produce EPS, LAB are not generally used as sources of thickening agents (either within a milk-based culture or as a source of exogenous EPS) because the EPS-positive phenotype is readily lost (Dierkesen et al., *J. Dairy Sci.* 80(8):1528-1536, 1997). The LAB strain described in this disclosure stably produces EPS when cultivated on appropriate media.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

A natural isolate of *Lactococcus lactis*, named "*Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352," hereinafter referred to simply as "Ropy 352", has been isolated. This strain contains a plasmid (EPS plasmid) that encodes at least 13 active genes (Figure 3). The enzymes encoded by these genes allow the bacteria to produce a previously unknown exopolysaccharide ("EPS 352"). Hence, in addition

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to providing EPS 352, the present invention also provides the nucleic acid sequences and the corresponding amino acid sequences of 13 of the open reading frames (ORFs; SEQ ID NO: 10) found on the EPS 352 plasmid.

5 EPS 352, when expressed in or added to milk or other liquids, imparts desirable sensory characteristics to the milk, including making the milk very thick, with a very smooth mouth-feel, and slightly sweet with an obvious "chewable-bite." Ropy 352 producing EPS, or EPS 352 alone may be added to any milk-based or non milk-based product, including any liquid food product, to produce these sensory characteristics. In the Ropy 352 strain, the biosynthesis of EPS 352 is controlled by
10 genes carried outside the chromosome on a plasmid of about 32 kb ("EPS 352 plasmid"). Precedent predicts that the EPS 352 genes are linked in an operon like fashion. The EPS 352 plasmid has been isolated from the Ropy 352 organism, and the plasmid has been transformed into a plasmid free nonropy laboratory strain of *Lactococcus*, MG1363. (Gasson, *J. Bacteriol.* 154:1-9, 1983.) The plasmid encoded
15 EPS 352 genes are expressed in the transformed strain, producing a ropy EPS, which imparts desirable sensory characteristics (as detailed below) to milk-based media.

One aspect of the invention provides the isolated *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352 organism (Ropy 352) as deposited under the rules of the Budapest Treaty, USDA-ARS-NCAUR-NRRL deposit number NRRL B-30229.
20 Ropy 352 can be added to liquids (e.g., solids, semi-solids and gels) to cause thickening. Such thickening is desirable for use in creating products such as food products, beauty care products, and pharmaceuticals. Additionally, the Ropy 352 organism can be used to produce food products by fermentation of a food substrate with a culture of the Ropy 352 organism. Accordingly, the invention also provides
25 the products made through the addition of the Ropy 352 culture.

Another aspect of the invention provides the purified exopolysaccharide EPS 352. EPS 352 can be added to liquids to produce food products as well as other products such as pharmaceuticals. Examples of such liquids include, liquid food substrates, such as milk-based liquids, soy-based liquids, fruit juice, and whey-based
30 liquids. Accordingly the invention also provides the products made through the addition of EPS 352.

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Yet another aspect of the invention provides the plasmid (contained in the deposited bacterial strain NRRL B-30229) that contains the open reading frames that encode the enzymes necessary for the production of EPS 352. This plasmid is approximately 32 kb in size. The identification of the plasmid allows for the
5 production of EPS 352 by transgenic organisms that have been transformed with the EPS 352 plasmid. Furthermore, these transgenic organisms can be added to liquids to generate food products.

Another aspect of the invention provides methods of using the individual enzymes encoded by the EPS 352 plasmid for the production of modified
10 exopolysaccharides. Used in these methods the enzymes derived from the nucleic acid sequence of the EPS 352 plasmid can be combined with other genes that code for exopolysaccharide biosynthetic pathways enzymes such that the exopolysaccharide produced is distinct from that of the disclosed EPS 352. Furthermore, these methods can be practiced *in vitro* or *in vivo*. (Stingele et al.,
15 *Mol. Microbiol.* 32(6):1287-1295, 1999; Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* 181(11):6347-6453, 1999; Stingele et al., *J. Bacteriol.* 181(20):6354-6360, 1999; and Klerrebezem et al., *Antonie van Leeuwenhoek* 76:357-365, 1999).

Another aspect of the invention provides methods of using EPS 352 in various pharmaceutical formulations. Used in this context EPS 352 can be
20 incorporated dry into pill formulations or into liquids to increase the viscosity of the formulation and facilitate delivery of the active ingredients.

Another aspect of the invention provides methods of using EPS 352 in various beauty products, such as hair shampoos, hair bleaching compositions, hair conditioners, hair gels and mousse, skin creams, nail varnishes, facial foundation,
25 skin tanning gels, hair removers, shaving creams and in pill coatings, children's products (i.e., crayons, non-toxic glues), in addition to various industrial processes. (Hilger et al., *J. Environ. Eng.* 125(12):1113, 1999 and Shah et al., *Appl. Biochem. Biotech.* 82(2):81, 1999.)

30

SEQUENCE LISTING

The nucleic and amino acid sequences listed in the accompanying sequence listing are shown using standard letter abbreviations for nucleotide bases, and three-

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letter code for amino acids. Only one strand of each nucleic acid sequence is shown, but the complementary strand is understood to be included by any reference to the displayed strand.

5 SEQ ID NO: 1 shows the nucleic acid sequence of a portion of the EPS 352 plasmid.

 SEQ ID NO: 2 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "R" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 3 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "X" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

10 SEQ ID NO: 4 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "A" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 5 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "B" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

15 SEQ ID NO: 6 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "C" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 7 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "D" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 8 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "E" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

20 SEQ ID NO: 9 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "O" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 10 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "P" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

25 SEQ ID NO: 11 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "F" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.

 SEQ ID NO: 12 shows the nucleic acid sequence encoding Eps "M" and Eps "N."

30 SEQ ID NO: 13 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "N" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 12.

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SEQ ID NO: 14 shows the amino acid sequence of the enzyme designated "M" in Figure 4, which is encoded by the nucleic acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 12.

5 SEQ ID NO: 15 shows the nucleic acid sequence encoding the enzyme designated "U."

SEQ ID NO: 16 shows the amino acid sequence of Eps "U," which is encoded by SEQ ID NO: 15.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 **Figure 1** describes the degree of phosphate protonation. As sodium hydroxide is added to the polysaccharide solution, there is only one inflection in the titration profiles, indicating that the phosphate group in the EPS 352 is in the form of a phosphodiester linkage rather than as the monoester, which would have shown 2 inflection points.

15 **Figure 2** shows double stranded sequence data from the EPS 352 plasmid and the corresponding amino acid sequences named EpsM and EpsN. The insertion site of the ISS1 element is indicated in EpsN and which confers a non-ropy phenotype in Ropy 352, thus linking these two open reading frames to EPS 352 expression.

20 **Figure 3** shows the alignments of the ORF designated "N" in Figure 4 and the ORF designated "M" in Figure 4 to each other as well as to an enzyme (EpsG) involved in eps biosynthesis in *Lactococcus lactis* NIZOB40. The overall identity between ORF "M" and EpsG is 24% and between ORF "N" and EpsG is 25%.

25 **Figure 4** is a diagram of the organization of the genes on the EPS 352 plasmid. The large arrows with letters inside represent genes and their orientation. The square with the letter X is a non-functional gene as it is missing its beginning (5' prime sequence). Eps ORFs are designated M, N, O, and P. The site of the ISS1 insertion, which disrupted EPS 352 production, is indicated by an downward pointing arrow that points to a position in Eps N.

30 **Figure 5** shows the DNA and amino acid sequence of the entire EPS operon from upstream of the promoter to downstream of the terminator. This sequence is

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6850 bp in length. The starts of the open reading frames are labeled with the gene name (corresponding to Figure 4) printed in the right margin.

Figure 6 shows the nucleic acid sequence of Eps U. The start and stop codons are underlined.

5

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

DEFINITIONS and ABBREVIATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, technical terms are used according to conventional usage. Definitions of common terms in molecular biology may be found in Benjamin Lewin, *Genes VII*, Oxford University Press, 1999 (ISBN 0-19-879276-X);
 10 Kendrew et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Molecular Biology* Blackwell Science Ltd., 1994 (ISBN 0-632-02182-9); and Robert A. Meyers (ed.), *Molecular Biology and Biotechnology: a Comprehensive Desk Reference*, VCH Publishers, Inc., 1995 (ISBN 1-56081-569-8).

W/V means weight per unit volume.

15

kDa means kilodaltons.

MWCO means molecular weight cutoff

TCA means trichloroacetic acid.

Mol % means molar percent

mPA-s means millipascals

20

n.d. means none detected.

Lactococcus lactis subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352 ("Ropy 352") is the organism deposited under the Budapest Treaty as USDA-ARS-NCAUR-NRRL deposit number NRRL B-30229. Ropy 352 has the characteristic property of producing the exopolysaccharide EPS 352 under suitable growth conditions, e.g.,
 25 streaked onto whey agar or defined lactococcal medium containing glucose agar plates and incubated at 30°C.

EPS 352 is an exopolysaccharide that is produced by Ropy 352 and that has the following characteristics:

30

Composition:	Glucose:	range of 54% to 58%
	Galactose:	range of 42% to 46%

Charged: Yes

Molecular weight: range of 800,000 to 8,000,000

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(average of 1,600,000)

Phosphorous: Present in backbone or sidechain

Structure: Endpoints: galactose; Branchpoints: glucose

5 Several gene products are required for EPS 352 biosynthesis. The EPS biosynthetic genes are located extrachromasomally on the EPS 352 plasmid. Precedent indicates that these genes are organized in an operon like fashion.

EPS 352 plasmid is an extrachromosomal plasmid of approximately 32 kb in size that carries the EPS 352 biosynthetic genes. Current methods used to
10 estimate plasmid size are not exact. For instance, the perceived size of a plasmid may be effected by the degree of relaxation of the plasmid and the degree to which proteins may be associated with the plasmid. Thus, the EPS 352 plasmid is believed to be about 32 kb in size, and may be, for example, from 30 to 38 kb in size. Several research groups have linked EPS biosynthesis with plasmids of various sizes: 6.8 kb,
15 25.8 kb, 28 kb, 40.2 kb, and 45.5 kb (Vescovo et al., *Biotech. Letters II* 10:709-712, 1989; Neve et al., *Biochimie* 70:437-442, 1988; Vedamuthu et al., *Appl. Environ. Microbiol.* 51:677-682, 1986; Kranenburg et al. *Mol. Microbiol.* 24:387-397, 1997; and Von Wright et al., *Appl. Environ. Microbiol.* 53:1385-1386, 1987).

Food means any eatable or drinkable substance consumed by humans or
20 animals, e.g., milk, cream, dairy products, soy products, fruit juice, vegetable juices, ice cream, soups, etc.

Food Product means any food that is produced by altering its original state, e.g., milk to which has been added EPS 352.

Milk is used broadly herein to include all dairy products regardless of fat
25 content or lactose content. The term as used herein also includes substances commonly used in place of milk, such as soy used as "soy milk". The term also includes milk products from animals other than cows, including goat milk.

Liquid as used herein includes fluids with varying degrees of fluidity including highly fluid liquids such as non-fat milk, thicker liquids such as full fat
30 milk and cream, semi-solid substances, and gels such as yogurt and other fermented milk products. A liquid may be altered from its original state to produce an altered liquid, e.g., an adhesive solution, a paint emulsion, a lubricant, or a fruit juice to which EPS 352 has been added.

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A Milk-Based liquid is any liquid wherein milk forms an appreciable percentage of the total volume of the liquid. For example, a liquid having 0.10% or more of milk solids.

A Soy-Based liquid is any liquid wherein soy forms an appreciable percentage of the total volume of the liquid. For example, a liquid having 0.10% or more of soy solids

To Thicken means to decrease fluidity and increase viscosity.

Thickener means any substance used to thicken, including, for instance, exopolysaccharides. A thickener may be produced by organisms cultured within a medium or may be added exogenously to a medium.

Mouth-feel is a term of art used in the food industry to describe sensory characteristics of a food. It has the same meaning as the word "texture" which has been previously defined as "the composite of the structural elements of the food and the manner in which it registers with the physiological sense" (Szczesniak, *J. Food Science* 28:385-389, 1963), or "the composite of those properties which arise from the physical structural elements and the manner in which it registers with the physiological senses" (Sherman, *J. Food Science* 27:381-385, 1970).

Pharmaceutical a chemical compound or composition capable of inducing a desired therapeutic or prophylactic effect when properly administered to a subject.

Beauty care product is an externally applied product that is intended to alter the appearance of the subject to which it has been applied.

Coating agent an agent applied to the exterior surface of an object. A coating agent generally forms a thin layer on the surface of the object.

Transformed refers to a cell into which a nucleic acid molecule has been introduced by molecular biology techniques. The term encompasses all techniques by which a nucleic acid molecule might be introduced into such a cell, including transformation with plasmid vectors, transfection with viral vectors, and introduction of naked DNA by electroporation, lipofection, and particle gun acceleration.

Purified does not require absolute purity; rather, it is intended as a relative term. Thus, for example, a purified polysaccharide preparation is one in which the subject polysaccharide is more pure than in its natural environment within a cell or within a cell culture medium. Generally, a polysaccharide preparation is purified

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such that the polysaccharide represents at least 50% of the total polysaccharide content of the preparation.

Isolated an *isolated* nucleic acid has been substantially separated or purified away from other nucleic acid sequences in the cell of the organism in which the
5 nucleic acid naturally occurs, i.e., other chromosomal and extrachromosomal DNA and RNA. The term "isolated" thus encompasses nucleic acids purified by standard nucleic acid purification methods. The term also embraces nucleic acids prepared by recombinant expression in a host cell, as well as chemically synthesized nucleic acids.

10 **ORF** is an open reading frame. An ORF is a contiguous series of nucleotide triplets coding for amino acids. These sequences are usually translatable into a peptide.

Operably linked means a first nucleic acid sequence is operably linked with a second nucleic acid sequence when the first nucleic acid sequence is placed in a
15 functional relationship with the second nucleic acid sequence. For instance, a promoter is operably linked to a coding sequence if the promoter affects the transcription or expression of the coding sequence. Generally, operably linked DNA sequences are contiguous and, where necessary to join two protein coding regions, in the same reading frame.

20 **Probe** is an isolated nucleic acid attached to a detectable label or reporter molecule. Typical labels include radioactive isotopes, ligands, chemiluminescent agents, and enzymes.

Target Nucleic Acid is a nucleic acid that hybridizes with a probe. The conditions under which hybridization occurs may vary with the size and sequence of
25 the probe and the target sequence.

By way of illustration, only a hybridization experiment may be performed by hybridization of a DNA probe (for example, a probe derived from the EPS 352 plasmid labeled with a chemiluminescent agent) to a target DNA molecule which has been electrophoresed in an agarose gel and transferred to a nitrocellulose
30 membrane by Southern blotting (a technique well known in the art and described in Sambrook et al., *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, 2nd ed., vols. 1-3, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, 1989).

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Hybridization with a radio-labeled probe is generally carried out in a solution of high ionic strength such as 6 x SSC at a temperature that is 20°C-25°C below the melting temperature, T_m , described below. For such Southern hybridization experiments where the target DNA molecule on the Southern blot contains 10 ng of DNA or more, hybridization is typically carried out for 6-8 hours using 1-2 ng/mL radiolabeled probe. Following hybridization, the nitrocellulose filter is washed to remove background hybridization. The wash conditions should be as stringent as possible to remove background hybridization but to retain a specific hybridization signal. The term T_m represents the temperature above which, under the prevailing ionic conditions, the radiolabeled probe molecule will not hybridize to its target DNA molecule. The T_m of such a hybrid molecule may be estimated from the following equation:

$$T_m = 81.5^\circ\text{C} - 16.6 (\log_{10} [\text{Na}^+]) + 0.41 (\%G+C) - 0.63 (\% \text{ formamide}) - (600 / l)$$

Where l = the length of the hybrid in base pairs. This equation is valid for concentrations of Na^+ in the range of 0.01M to 0.4M, and it is less accurate for calculations of T_m in solutions of higher $[\text{Na}^+]$. The equation is primarily valid for DNAs whose G+C content is in the range of 30% to 75%, and applies to hybrids greater than 100 nucleotides in length (the behavior of oligonucleotide probes is described in detail in Ch. 11 of Sambrook et al., 1989).

Generally hybridization wash conditions are classified into categories, for example very high stringency, high stringency, and low stringency. The conditions corresponding to these categories are provided below.

Very High Stringency (detects sequences that share 90% sequence identity)

Hybridization in	5x	SSC	at	65°C	16 hours
Wash twice in	2x	SSC	at	Room temp.	15 minutes each
Wash twice in	0.2x	SSC	at	65°C	20 minutes each

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High Stringency (detects sequences that share 80% sequence identity or greater)

Hybridization in 3x SSC at 65°C 16 hours
 Wash twice in 2x SSC at Room temp. 15 minutes each
 5 Wash twice in 0.5x SSC at 55°C 20 minutes each

Low Stringency (detects sequences that share greater than 50% sequence identity)

Hybridization in 3x SSC at 65°C 16 hours
 10 Wash twice in 2x SSC at Room temp. 20 minutes

The above example is given entirely by way of theoretical illustration. One skilled in the art will appreciate that other hybridization techniques may be utilized and that variations in experimental conditions will necessitate alternative calculations for stringency.

Conservative amino acid substitutions are those substitutions that, when made, least interfere with the properties of the original protein, i.e., the structure and especially the function of the protein is conserved and not significantly changed by such substitutions. The table below shows amino acids that may be substituted for an original amino acid in a protein and that are regarded as conservative substitutions.

TABLE 1

Original Residue	Conservative Substitutions
ala	ser
arg	lys
asn	gln; his
asp	glu
cys	ser
gln	asn
glu	asp
gly	pro

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Original Residue	Conservative Substitutions
his	asn; gln
ile	leu; val
leu	ile; val
lys	arg; gln; glu
met	leu; ile
phe	met; leu; tyr
ser	thr
thr	ser
trp	tyr
tyr	trp; phe
val	ile; leu

Conservative substitutions generally maintain (a) the structure of the polypeptide backbone in the area of the substitution, for example, as a sheet or helical conformation, (b) the charge or hydrophobicity of the molecule at the target site, or (c) the bulk of the side chain.

The substitutions which in general are expected to produce the greatest changes in protein properties will be non-conservative. For instance, changes in which (a) a hydrophilic residue, e.g., seryl or threonyl, is substituted for (or by) a hydrophobic residue, e.g., leucyl, isoleucyl, phenylalanyl, valyl or alanyl; (b) a cysteine or proline is substituted for (or by) any other residue; (c) a residue having an electropositive side chain, e.g., lysyl, arginyl, or histadyl, is substituted for (or by) an electronegative residue, e.g., glutamyl or aspartyl; or (d) a residue having a bulky side chain, e.g., phenylalanine, is substituted for (or by) one not having a side chain, e.g., glycine.

Primers are short nucleic acids, preferably DNA oligonucleotides 10 nucleotides or more in length, which are annealed to a complementary target DNA strand by nucleic acid hybridization to form a hybrid between the primer and the target DNA strand, then extended along the target DNA strand by a DNA polymerase enzyme. Primer pairs can be used for amplification of a nucleic acid sequence, e.g., by the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or other nucleic-acid amplification methods known in the art.

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Probes and primers as used in the present invention typically comprise at least 15 contiguous nucleotides of a known sequence. In order to enhance specificity, longer probes and primers may also be employed, such as probes and primers that comprise at least 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, or 150 consecutive
5 nucleotides of the disclosed nucleic acid sequences.

Methods for preparing and using probes and primers are described in the references, for example Sambrook et al., *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, 2nd ed., vol. 1-3, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, 1989; Ausubel et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Greene Publ. Assoc. & Wiley-Intersciences, 1987;
10 Innis et al., *PCR Protocols, A Guide to Methods and Applications*, 1990. PCR primer pairs can be derived from a known sequence, for example, by using computer programs intended for that purpose such as *Primer* (Version 0.5, 1991, Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Cambridge, MA).

Recombinant nucleic acid is a sequence that is not naturally occurring or
15 has a sequence that is made by an artificial combination of two otherwise separated segments of sequence. This artificial combination is often accomplished by chemical synthesis or, more commonly, by the artificial manipulation of isolated segments of nucleic acids, e.g., by genetic engineering techniques such as those described in Sambrook et al. (1989). The term recombinant includes nucleic acids
20 that have been altered solely by addition, substitution, or deletion of a portion of the nucleic acid. Frequently, a recombinant nucleic acid may include a nucleic acid sequence operably linked to a promoter sequence. Such a recombinant nucleic acid may be part of a vector, used to transform a cell.

Sequence identity: The similarity between two nucleic acid sequences or
25 between two amino acid sequences is expressed in terms of the level of sequence identity shared between the sequences. Sequence identity is typically expressed in terms of percentage identity; the higher the percentage, the more similar the two sequences.

Methods for aligning sequences for comparison are well known in the art.
30 Various programs and alignment algorithms are described in: Smith & Waterman, *Adv. Appl. Math.* 2:482, 1981; Needleman & Wunsch, *J. Mol. Biol.* 48:443, 1970; Pearson & Lipman, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 85:2444, 1988; Higgins & Sharp,

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Gene 73:237-244, 1988; Higgins & Sharp, *CABIOS* 5:151-153, 1989; Corpet et al., *Nucleic Acids Research* 16:10881-10890, 1988; Huang, et al., *CABIOS* 8:155-165, 1992; and Pearson et al., *Methods in Molecular Biology* 24:307-331, 1994. Altschul et al., *J. Mol. Biol.* 215:403-410, 1990, presents a detailed consideration of sequence alignment methods and homology calculations.

The NCBI Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST™) (Altschul et al., *J. Mol. Biol.* 215:403-410, 1990) is available from several sources, including the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI, Bethesda, MD) and on the Internet, for use in connection with the sequence analysis programs blastp, blastn, blastx, tblastn and tblastx. BLAST™ can be accessed on the internet at NCBI website. A description of how to determine sequence identity using this program is available at the web site. As used herein, sequence identity is commonly determined with the BLAST™ software set to default parameters. For instance, blastn (version 2.0) software may be used to determine sequence identity between two nucleic acid sequences using default parameters (expect = 10, matrix = BLOSUM62, filter = DUST (Tatusov and Lipmann, in preparation as of December 1, 1999; and Hancock and Armstrong, *Comput. Appl. Biosci.* 10:67-70, 1994), gap existence cost = 11, per residue gap cost = 1, and lambda ratio = 0.85). For comparison of two polypeptides, blastp (version 2.0) software may be used with default parameters (expect 10, filter = SEG (Wootton and Federhen, *Computers in Chemistry* 17:149-163, 1993), matrix = BLOSUM62, gap existence cost = 11, per residue gap cost = 1, lambda = 0.85).

For comparisons of amino acid sequences of greater than about 30 amino acids, the "Blast 2 sequences" function of the BLAST™ program is employed using the default BLOSUM62 matrix set to default parameters, (gap existence cost of 11, and a per residue gap cost of 1). When aligning short peptides (fewer than around 30 amino acids), the alignment should be performed using the Blast 2 sequences function, employing the PAM30 matrix set to default parameters (open gap 9, extension gap 1 penalties). Proteins with even greater similarity to the reference sequences will show increasing percentage identities when assessed by this method, such as at least 45%, at least 50%, at least 60%, at least 80%, at least 85%, at least 90%, or at least 95% sequence identity.

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METHODS

General Methods

The present invention utilizes standard laboratory practices for the cloning, manipulation and sequencing of nucleic acids, purification and analysis of proteins and other molecular biological and biochemical techniques, unless otherwise stipulated. Such techniques are explained in detail in standard laboratory manuals such as Sambrook et al., *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, 2nd ed., vol. 1-3, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, 1989; and Ausubel et al., *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Greene Publ. Assoc. & Wiley-Intersciences, 1989. Other techniques specific to *Lactococcus* are discussed in the inventors' publications including: Dierksen et al., *Genetics of Streptococci, Enterococci and Lactococci*, (Ferretti et al., eds.), 1995; Basel, *Dev. Biol. Stand* 85:469-480, 1995; Dierksen et al., *J. Dairy Sci.*, 80(8):1528-1536, 1997; and Knoshaug et al., *J. Dairy Sci.* 83:633-640, 2000.

15

1. Growth and Characterization of the Ropy 352 organism.

The EPS 352 producing organism, *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352, was isolated, classified and deposited under the Budapest Convention as USDA-ARS-NCAUR-NRRL deposit number NRRL B-30229. Ropy 352 may be obtained on demand from the USDA-ARS-NCAUR-NRRL at Agricultural Research Service Culture Collection (NRRL), National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research (NCAUR), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 1815 North University Street, Peoria, IL 61604 U.S.A. Ropy 352 was streaked onto whey agar or defined lactococcal media containing glucose (DLMG) agar. Whey agar (Vedamuthu et al., *Appl. Microbiol.* 51:677-682, 1986) made as previously described with the following modifications: yeast extract (5 g, Difco Laboratories, Detroit, MI) and sodium β -glycerophosphate (19 g, Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO) were added to the centrifuged supernatant and the volume brought up to 600 mL. The second part of the media consisted of 15 g of agar and 3 drops of antifoam A (Sigma) in 400 mL of water. Both portions were autoclaved for 12 min; removed promptly, cooled to 50°C, mixed, and poured into sterile petri plates. DLMG agar (Molenaar et al., *J. Bacteriol.* 175:5438-5444,

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1993.) was prepared as two parts; part one consisted of the base media which was prepared in 758 mL of water, heated to dissolve the components, mixed with 10 mL of the metals, vitamins, and nucleic acid solutions and 12 mL of 20% glucose or lactose solution, filter sterilized, and heated to 55°C in a water bath. Part two
5 consisted of 10 g of agar and 2 drops of antifoam A (Sigma) which were mixed into 200 mL of water, autoclaved, and cooled to 55°C. Part one was mixed into part two and poured into sterile petri plates. Ropy 352 was streaked onto plates and incubated at 30°C to produce macroscopic, individual, EPS 352 producing colonies of Ropy 352 (procedure described in inventors' publications listed above).

10 The EPS 352 may be recognized by the formation of viscous ropes greater than five mm in length originating from a whey agar or DLMG agar. Whey agar plates were incubated at 30°C for 48 h. Characteristic ropy phenotype is apparent from viscous rope greater than 5 mm formed when a colony is touched with a sterile toothpick. These ropes became visible when the colony was touched with a sterile
15 toothpick and the toothpick was drawn away from the colony, thus, stretching the EPS 352 out. An additional way to recognize EPS 352 is by the formation of viscous ropes in liquid milk inoculated with Ropy 352 organism. Liquid milk was sterilized by steaming for 30 min and 10 mL of milk were inoculated with 0.5 mL of an overnight Ropy 352 culture. The milk was incubated for 18 hours at 30°C and
20 visually examined for ropy EPS expression. These viscous ropes were visualized by touching the milk with a toothpick and drawing the toothpick away from the milk.

2. Purification and Characterization of EPS 352.

An individual EPS 352 producing Ropy 352 colony from a whey agar plate
25 was picked and used to inoculate 1 L of polysaccharide production medium in a 2.8 L Fernbach flask. The medium was cultured at 30°C for 16 to 20 hours without shaking. The polysaccharide production medium consisted of 10% w/v nonfat milk in water, which was prepared by stirring 100 g dry milk powder into 1 L deionized water at room temperature for 1 hour and then sterilizing the mixture in an autoclave
30 for 12 minutes at 120°C.

Ropy 352 culture broths were transferred to 500 mL centrifuge bottles and insoluble fractions were pelleted at 10 K x g for 20 minutes. Clarified supernatants

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were dialyzed (6-8 kDa MWCO, Spectra/Por 1; Spectrum Laboratories, Inc., Laguna Hills, CA) against water containing 0.02% sodium azide for at least 24 hours.

An equal volume of absolute ethanol was added to the contents of the dialysis tubing and stirred in an ice bath. Ropy 352 cultures formed a precipitate of elongated ropes that were collected by centrifugation as described above. This was
5 termed the Ropy fraction and contained EPS 352.

From 1 L of 10% nonfat milk medium, 34 mg of total polysaccharide was recovered from Ropy 352 cultures after centrifugation and dialysis. The polysaccharide responsible for the ropy characteristic (EPS 352) was purified by
10 precipitation with 50% ethanol, followed by trichloroacetic acid (TCA) removal of residual protein. This Ropy fraction contained 10 mg of polysaccharide and was essentially protein free (<20 µg/mg in the final product). The Ropy fraction also contained 2.3 µg phosphorus/mg polysaccharide.

Compositional analysis of EPS 352 revealed a repeating structure composed
15 of approximately 54% to 58% glucose, and 42% to 46% galactose. Compositional data suggests a novel structure for EPS 352 with glucose as the branch residue and galactose located at the end points.

The predominant sugar found in EPS 352, at 36 mol%, is (1,4)-linked glucose. The only sugar found as terminal non-reducing end groups (i.e., had a
20 single linkage position) was galactose at 27 mol%; this quantity is indicative of a highly branched structure. A (1,4,6)-linked glucose residue was found at a concentration of 21 mol%; the three linkage sites indicate that it is a branch point in this structure. The least represented sugar was the (1,4)-linked galactose, which occurred at a concentration of 15 mol%. Results from this analysis are listed in
25 Table 2:

Table 2
Identification of permethylated PAAN (Peracetylated aldononitrile)
derivatives from Ropy 352 and Ropy polysaccharides

PAAN methyl sugar	Linkage site	Ropy fraction from Ropy 352 (mol%)
2,3,4,6-tetra- <i>O</i> -methyl galactose	1	27
2,3,6-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl galactose	1,4	15
2,4,6-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl galactose	1,6	n.d. (none detected)
2,3,4-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl galactose	1,6	n.d.
2,3,6-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl glucose	1,4	36
2,3,4-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl glucose	1,6	n.d.
3,4,6-tri- <i>O</i> -methyl mannose	1,2	n.d.
2,3-di- <i>O</i> -methyl glucose	1,4,6	21
3,4-di- <i>O</i> -methyl glucose	1,2,6	n.d.
2,4-di- <i>O</i> -methyl mannose	1,3,6	n.d.

The degree of phosphate protonation is shown in Figure 1. As sodium hydroxide was added to the polysaccharide solution, there was only one inflection in the titration profiles, indicating that the phosphate group in the Ropy fraction polysaccharides is in the form of a phosphodiester linkage rather than as the monoester, which would have shown 2 inflection points.

3. Viscosity of Milk Culture During 25 hour Fermentation with Ropy 352.

1 L of milk was inoculated with a single whey agar-grown colony of Ropy 352. Viscosity was measured with a Brookfield model LVTDV-I digital viscometer (Stoughton, MA) using a LV1 spindle.

The viscosity of the Ropy 352 culture reached a value of 44000 mPa-s at 24 hours, compared to an initial viscosity of 1 mPa-s (see Table 3). This data verifies the phenotypic observation that Ropy 352 culture thickens a liquid food product (milk).

Table 3
Viscosity change (in mPa-s) after 24 h.

Strain	Sample	0 h	24 h
Ropy 352	Fermented milk	1.0	44000
No cells	Milk	1.0	1.0

- 20 -

4. Isolation and Characterization of the Biosynthetic EPS 352 Plasmid.

The EPS 352 plasmid is a plasmid of about 32 kb in size that may be isolated from Ropy 352. A 2.2 KB fragment from the EPS 352 plasmid (Figure 2) and a
5 6.85 kb fragment (Figure 4) have been sequenced. These sequences encode ORFs M and N which show homology to a class of sugar transfer enzymes (glycosyltransferases) known to be involved in EPS biosynthesis (Figure 2). Several restriction endonucleases cut this plasmid, including *EcoRI*, *EcoRV*, *HindIII*, *SacI*, *SphI*, *DraI*, *HincII*, *NdeI*, *Sau3AI*, and *SpeI*.

10 The EPS 352 plasmid contains all biosynthetic genes coding for the enzymes needed to make EPS 352. This was demonstrated by the following experiment. The EPS 352 plasmid, containing an erythromycin resistant encoded insertion element for selection, was isolated from a culture of Ropy 352 using DNA preparation methods as described in Knoshaug et al., *J. Dairy Science* 83:633-640, 2000. (Ref
15 for plasmid DNA isolation: O'Sullivan et al., *Appl Environ Microbiol.* 59:2730-2733, 1993). This DNA was used to transform a plasmid-free nonropy lactococcal strain, MG1363 by electroporation as described (Dornan et al., *Lett. Appl. Microbiol.* 11:62-64, 1990; Holo et al., *Appl. Environ. Microbiol.* 55:3119-3123, 1989). Cells were grown for 24 hours in M17-glucose media supplemented with 0.3 M sucrose
20 and 2% (MG1363) or 0.5% (Ropy352) glycine. Cells were pelleted, washed in cold 0.3 M sucrose three times, and resuspended in 200 µl of 0.3 cold M sucrose. DNA was added to the cells and the mixture was transferred to a chilled electroporation cuvette (0.2 cm gap). The cells were shocked (2.5 kV, 200 ohms, 25 µF) and resuspended in 8 mL of growth media supplemented with 0.3 M sucrose and 50
25 ng/mL em. Cells were allowed to recover for 1.5 hours before plating on whey agar containing 2 µg/mL em. Erythromycin resistant transformants were selected, and then screened for the ropy EPS 352 phenotype. MG1363 containing the EPS 352 plasmid was analyzed by Southern blot to verify the presence of the plasmid. The probe used was 1.6 kb long and specific to the Ropy 352 EPS ORF M and ORF N
30 genes. Results demonstrated that the probe reacted with a 32 kb plasmid in Ropy352 (un-nicked and nicked forms) and with a 37 kb plasmid in EK356 (EPS

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352 plasmid containing a 5.4 kb erythromycin resistant encoded insertion element for selection; un-nicked and nicked forms).

The southern blot analysis was additionally confirmed by testing the transformed bacteria for the Ropy phenotype. Results showed that the phenotypic
5 carried over to the MG1363 strain.

5. Production of Food Products by Adding EPS 352 to a Food Substrate.

EPS 352 can be added to a liquid food substrate to increase viscosity and thickness of the liquid and to enhance texture and mouth-feel. Liquid food
10 substrates may include, but are not limited to: milk (including low-fat and non-fat milk), milk-based liquids, whey-based liquids, soy-based liquids, fruit-juices, and oil-based liquids and emulsions. EPS 352 can be used to enhance the thickness and texture of, for example, yogurt, milk-shakes, fruit-juices, soy drinks, Scandinavian fermented milk products (e.g., "villi, "langfil," and "filmjolk,"), bakery fillings,
15 dressings, sauces and gravies. EPS 352 can also be added to solid or semi-solid food substrates to enhance the texture of, for instance, frozen foods, canned foods and cheeses. Thickness of the liquid food substrate will increase in proportion to the amount of EPS 352 added. EPS 352 may be added to any liquid food substrate in an amount necessary to produce the desired consistency. Determining an amount
20 necessary to produce a desired consistency is a simple matter of empirical experimentation.

A specific example of a food product made using EPS 352 is a thickened, non-fermented food product that has the qualities of yogurt, but without the need for fermentation. Milk (e.g., non-fat milk) can be used as a liquid food substrate to
25 which an amount of EPS 352 can be added, sufficient to cause thickening to a desired consistency. EPS 352 may be supplied in the form of an essentially pure powder and added directly to the milk. The powder may be mixed into the milk at room temperature using conventional methods and the mixture may then be aliquoted into sealed containers and pasteurized. Such a product would be low in
30 fat, have a yogurt-like consistency, and would not require fermentation, a step which is time-consuming, expensive and prone to microbial contamination.

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6. Production of Milk-Derived Fermented Food Products by Adding a Pure Culture of the Ropy 352 Organism to a Food Substrate and Fermenting the Mixture.

Ropy 352 can be used to produce fermented food products such as yogurt
5 (and other products as listed above). Such products are described as probiotic (this refers to organisms who are ingested, such as the LAB, which contribute to the health and balance of the human's intestinal tract thus possibly protecting against disease and improving nutrition). During fermentation, Ropy 352 produces the EPS
352 exopolysaccharide which imparts desirable qualities to certain foods. In
10 particular, EPS 352 gives fermented milk products a very smooth, rich mouth-feel with a slightly sweet flavor.

A specific example of a fermented food product made using Ropy 352 is yogurt. Milk (e.g., either whole, 2% or non-fat milk) can be used as a liquid food substrate to which a pure culture of Ropy 352 can be added. The culture may be
15 fermented, for instance at 30°C without shaking for 16 to 20 hours. The EPS 352 culture may be supplied in the form as an aliquot of liquid culture or an inoculum from an agar plate (such as milk or whey agar plate). Following fermentation, the fermented product may be aliquoted into sealed containers and pasteurized. A second specific example of a fermented food product made using Ropy 352 is a
20 power shake for the elderly and diet shakes for the obese. Trade names such as Slimfast™ or Ensure™ can be used as a liquid food substrate to which a pure culture of Ropy 352 can be added. Both Slimfast™ and Ensure™ were inoculated with a culture of Ropy352 and incubated at 30°C for 24 hours, respectively. The results showed that not only did Ropy 352 thicken these products, but it also added active
25 culture (probiotic) status.

The duration and temperature of fermentation may vary. Representative temperatures may range from about 17°C to 30°C and duration of fermentation of a batch culture may be from about 10 to 36 hours. Alternatively, fermentation may be done as a continuous culture with portions of the fermented product being
30 periodically removed.

7. The Use of Enzymes Derived from the EPS 352 Plasmid

Enzymes derived from the EPS 352 plasmid can be used either *in vitro* or *in vivo* to produce and or modify EPS structure. Furthermore, these enzymes can be modified through the inclusion of one or more conservative amino acid

- 5 substitutions, however, such conservative amino acid substituted variants will continue to maintain the same activity of the enzyme from which they are derived.

a. *in vitro*

Enzymes from the EPS 352 plasmid can be combined with other enzymes and substrates *in vivo*, such that an EPS is produced with the desired characteristics.

- 10 *In vitro* production of an EPS involves provide the isolated enzymes that are to be used in the synthesis as well as the various substrates necessary for the production of the EPS. Detailed examples of EPS production *in vitro* are well known in the art and can be found for example in Bossia et al., *Cell Mol Biol (Noisy-le-grand)* 42(5):737-58, 1996 and
- 15 Semino et al., *J Gen Microbiol* 139 (Pt 11):2745-56, 1993.

b. *in vivo*

The enzymes produced from the expression of ORFs, such as ORF M (SEQ ID NO: 14), ORF N (SEQ ID NO: 13), ORF O (SEQ ID NO: 9), and ORF P (SEQ ID NO: 10) that are derived from the EPS 352 plasmid can be placed under the

- 20 control of heterologous control sequences. Such control sequences can be selected from constitutive promoters, inducible promoters, enhancers, and various terminators. Together the control sequence(s) operably linked to the ORF is termed the "transgene". The transgene can then be transformed into a host organism that supports the production of an EPS. Upon expression of the protein from the
- 25 transgene at least a portion of the EPS generated from the transformed host organism will be distinct from the non-transformed host organism.

It is also possible that the control sequences found in the EPS 352 plasmid can be used to express one of more of the ORF from the EPS 352 plasmid. Used in this way the "transgene" generated will be the result of using recombinant DNA

30 technology to manipulate the endogenous EPS 352 plasmid such that the naturally occurring EPS 352 plasmid is not intact. Such transgenes result from the introduction of additional copies of one or more of the ORFs that are in the naturally

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occurring EPS 352 plasmid. It is also possible that enzymes from other EPS producing organisms will be introduced into the EPS 352 operon such that the host cell expresses an EPS that is distinct from the Ropy 352 disclosed herein.

5

EXAMPLES

1. Production of a Thickened Milk Product by Adding a Pure Culture of the Ropy 352 Organism to Milk and Fermenting the Mixture.

Ropy EPS 352 was expressed on plates containing whey agar and in liquid milk. The whey agar plates were incubated at 30°C for 48 hours. Colonies were
10 then touched with a sterile toothpick to test for Ropy EPS 352 expression. Liquid milk was sterilized by steaming for 30 minutes. 10 mL of the sterilized milk were then inoculated with 0.5 mL of an overnight pure culture of the Ropy 352 organism. The milk was incubated for 18 hours at 30°C and visually examined for coagulation and ropy EPS 352 expression. Ropiness was indicated using a sterile glass rod to
15 pull ropes from the milk.

2. Production of a Thickened Liquid Product by Adding a Pure Culture of the Ropy 352 Organism to Power Drinks Designed for the Elderly and Diet Drinks Designed for the Obese.

20 Ropy 352 was grown and EPS 352 was expressed in Slim Fast™ (Slim-Fast Foods Co., West Palm Beach, Florida) chocolate diet drink and Ensure™ (Abbott Laboratories, Abbott Park, Illinois) chocolate fortified drink. Slim Fast™ and Ensure™ drinks were inoculated with Ropy 352 and incubated for 18 hours at 30°C and visually examined for coagulation and ropy EPS 352 expression. Ropiness was
25 determined using a sterile glass rod to pull ropes from the milk, and by visually examining how the fermented liquid poured from a flask.

3. Use of the EPS 352 Plasmid to Transform Cells and to Produce EPS 352.

The EPS 352 plasmid, containing an erythromycin resistant encoded
30 insertion element for detection, was isolated from a culture of Ropy 352 using DNA preparation methods as described in Knoshaug et al., *J. Dairy Sci.* 83:633-640, 2000 (and as referred to in the methods section of this document). This DNA was used to

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transform a plasmid-free nonropy lactococcal strain, MG1363. Erythromycin resistant transformants were selected, and then screened for the ropy EPS 352 phenotype. Those displaying the ropy EPS 352 phenotype were Gram stained to verify that Gram positive cocci were present. MG1363 containing the EPS 352 plasmid was analyzed by Southern blot to verify the presence of EPS 352 plasmid. Presence of the EPS 352 plasmid in MG1363 correlated to the acquisition of the ropy EPS 352 phenotype.

4. Use of EPS 352 as a Substitute for Xanthan Gum

Xanthan gum is a high molecular weight polysaccharide derived from *Xanthomonas Campestris*. It contains D-glucose, D-mannose, and D-glucuronic acid as the dominant hexose units. For a more detailed discussion of the composition, physical and chemical properties, preparation, etc. of xanthan gum, see the following publications: Federal Register, Vol. 34, No. 53, Mar. 19, 1969, Subchapter B, Part 121, Subpart D; Keltrol, Technical Bulletin DB No. 18, Kelco Company, Clark, New Jersey.

Xanthan gum is currently used in a variety of compounds, as is evidenced by the fact that a search of the United States Patent and Trademark Office website on the Internet for "xanthan gum" in the claims of U.S. patents that have issued since 1976 identified 1,276 patents. These patents show xanthan gum being used in sprayable cleaning compositions (U.S. patent No. 5,948,743), hair conditioning shampoo (U.S. patent No. 5,948,739), ballpoint pen ink (U.S. patent No. 5,925,175), time-specific controlled release dosage formulations (U.S. patent No. 5,891,474), to improve gloss retention of surfactants (U.S. patent No. 5,877,142), as well as for many other purposes.

5. Enzymatic Activity of the Enzymes Produced By the EPS 352 Plasmid

The EPS plasmid contains at least 5 previously unidentified open reading frames encoding 5 previously unidentified enzymes (O, P, N, M, and U, which are provided in SEQ ID NOS: 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14, respectively). Sequence analysis using Blast™ searching indicates that the "M" enzyme (SEQ ID NO: 13) is a glycosyltransferase enzyme. Methods of testing glycosyltransferase activity are

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well known in the art and described in: van Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(1):338-340, 1999; Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(11):6347-6353, 1999; Stinge et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(20):6354-6360, 1999; Kolkman et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(13):3736-3741 1996; Kolkman et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **272**(31):19502-19508; Breton, et al., *Curr. Opin. Struct. Biol.* **9**:563-571, 1999; and Griffiths et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **273**(19):11752-11757, 1998, which are herein incorporated by reference.

Similarly, sequence analysis using BlastTM searching indicates that the "P" enzyme (SEQ ID NO: 10) is a polysaccharide polymerase. Methods of testing polysaccharide polymerase activity are well known in the art and described in: Gonzalez et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* **95**:13477-13482, 1998; Stevenson et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(16):4885-4893, 1996; and Glucksmann et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **175**(21):7045-7055, 1993, which are herein incorporated by reference.

Sequence analysis using BlastTM searching indicates that the "N" enzyme (SEQ ID NO: 12) is a galactosyltransferase enzyme. Methods of testing galactosyltransferase activity are well known in the art and described in: van Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(1):338-340, 1999; Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(11):6347-6353, 1999; Stinge et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(20):6354-6360, 1999; Kolkman et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(13):3736-3741, 1996; Kolkman, et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **272**(31):19502-19508, 1997; Breton et al., *Curr. Opin. Struct. Biol.* **9**:563-571, 1999; and Griffiths et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **273**(19):11752-11757, 1998, which are herein incorporated by reference.

Sequence analysis using BlastTM searching indicates that the "O" enzyme (SEQ ID NO: 9) is a multi-unit transporting or exporter enzyme. Methods of testing activity are well known in the art and described in: Stevenson et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(16):4885-4893, 1996; Glucksmann et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **175**(21):7045-7055, 1993; and Smith et al., *Mol. Microbiol.* **4**(11):1863-1869, 1990, which are herein incorporated by reference.

Finally, sequence analysis using BlastTM searching indicates that the "U" enzyme (SEQ ID NO: 15) is a glycosyltransferase/exporter enzyme. Methods of

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testing glycosyltransferase/exporter activity are well known in the art and described in: Stevenson et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(16):4885-4893, 1996; Glucksmann et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **175**(21):7045-7055, 1993; Smith et al., *Mol. Microbiol.* **4**(11):1863-1869, 1990; van Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(1):338-340, 1999; Kranenburg et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(11):6347-6353, 1999; Stingle et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **181**(20):6354-6360, 1999.; Kolkman et al., *J. Bacteriol.* **178**(13):3736-3741, 1996; Kolkman et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **272**(31):19502-19508, 1997; Breton et al., *Struct. Biol.* **9**:563-571, 1999; and Griffiths et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* **273**(19):11752-11757, 1998, which are herein incorporated by reference.

10 Having illustrated and described the principles of the invention in multiple embodiments and examples, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that the invention can be modified in arrangement and detail without departing from such principles. The invention encompasses all modifications coming within the spirit and scope of the following claims.

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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5

1. An isolated bacterium having the characteristics of *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352, as deposited with the USDA-ARS-NCAUR-NRRL as deposit accession number NRRL B-30229.

10

2. A purified ropy polysaccharide wherein the polysaccharide has characteristics comprising:

Composition: Glucose: range of 54% to 58%

Galactose: range of 42% to 46%

Charged: Yes

15

Molecular weight: range of 800,000 to 8,000,000

Phosphorous: Present in backbone or sidechain

Structure: endpoints: galactose;
branchpoints: glucose

20

3. A purified ropy polysaccharide, isolated from *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352.

4. The purified polysaccharide of claim 3 wherein the polysaccharide has the characteristics of:

25

Composition: Glucose: range of 54% to 58%

Galactose: range of 42% to 46%

Charged: Yes

Molecular weight: range of 800,000 to 8,000,000

Phosphorous: Present in backbone or sidechain

30

Structure: endpoints: galactose;
branchpoints: glucose

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5. A method of thickening a liquid comprising adding to a liquid the purified polysaccharide of claim 2.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the liquid is a food.

5

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of milk, a milk-based liquid, a whey-based liquid, a soy-based liquid, and a fruit-juice.

10

8. A food product made by the method of claim 6.

9. A method of thickening a liquid comprising adding to a liquid the purified polysaccharide of claim 3.

15

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the liquid is a food.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of milk, a milk-based liquid, a whey-based liquid, a soy-based liquid, and a fruit-juice.

20

12. A food product made by the method of claim 10.

13. A method of making a food product comprising addition of a culture of Ropy 352 to a food that is devoid of Ropy 352.

25

14. The method of claim 10 wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of milk, a milk-based liquid, a whey-based liquid, a soy-based liquid, and a fruit-juice.

30

15. A food product made by the method of claim 13.

16. An isolated plasmid of approximately 20 kb derived from *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352, wherein the plasmid, when expressed in the transformed lab strain of *Lactococcus* MG1363, expresses a ropy polysaccharide, wherein the polysaccharide has characteristics comprising:

5	Composition:	Glucose: range of 54% to 58%
		Galactose: range of 42% to 46%
	Charged:	Yes
	Molecular weight:	range of 800,000 to 8,000,000
	Phosphorous:	Present in backbone or sidechain
10	Structure:	endpoints: galactose;
		branchpoints: glucose

17. A probe comprising a detectable label attached to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of:

15 a portion of the plasmid of claim 16, and
the plasmid of claim 16.

18. A method of detecting a target nucleic acid comprising the steps of:
contacting the target nucleic acid with the probe of claim 17 under
20 conditions wherein the probe hybridizes with the target nucleic acid, and
detecting the detectable label.

19. A cell transformed with the plasmid of claim 16.

25 20. The cell of claim 19, wherein the cell is selected from the group
consisting of: a bacterial cell, a yeast cell, a fungal cell, an animal cell and a plant
cell.

21. A method of making a food product comprising addition of the cell of
30 claim 16 to a food that is devoid of the plasmid of claim 16.

22. A method for making a pharmaceutical product comprising:

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combining an active ingredient and the purified ropy polysaccharide of claim 2.

23. A pharmaceutical product made by the method of claim 22.

5

24. A method of making a beauty care product, comprising adding the purified ropy polysaccharide of claim 2.

25. A beauty care product made by the method of claim 24.

10

26. A method of making a coating agent, comprising adding the purified ropy polysaccharide of claim 2.

27. A coating agent made by the method of claim 26.

15

28. A purified protein, comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 9, 10, 13, 14, and 16;

20 (b) an amino acid sequence that differs from those specified in (a) by one or more conservative amino acid substitutions; and

(c) an amino acid sequence having at least 60% sequence identity to the sequences specified in (a).

25 29. An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a protein according to claim 28.

30. An isolated nucleic acid molecule, comprising a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

30 (a) a nucleic acid sequence selected encoding an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NOS: 9, 10, 13, 14, and 15;

- 32 -

(b) a nucleic acid sequence that shares at least 60% sequence identity with the nucleic acid sequences described in (a);

(b) an nucleic acid sequence that comprises at least 15 consecutive nucleotides of the sequences shown in (b).

5

31. A recombinant nucleic acid molecule comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a nucleic acid sequence according to claim 30.

10 32. A cell transformed with a recombinant nucleic acid molecule according to claim 31.

33. A transgenic bacteria comprising a recombinant nucleic acid according to claim 31.

15 34. A method of producing a protein, comprising:
culturing a cell according to claim 32, wherein the cell expresses at least one protein from the recombinant nucleic acid; and
isolating the protein.

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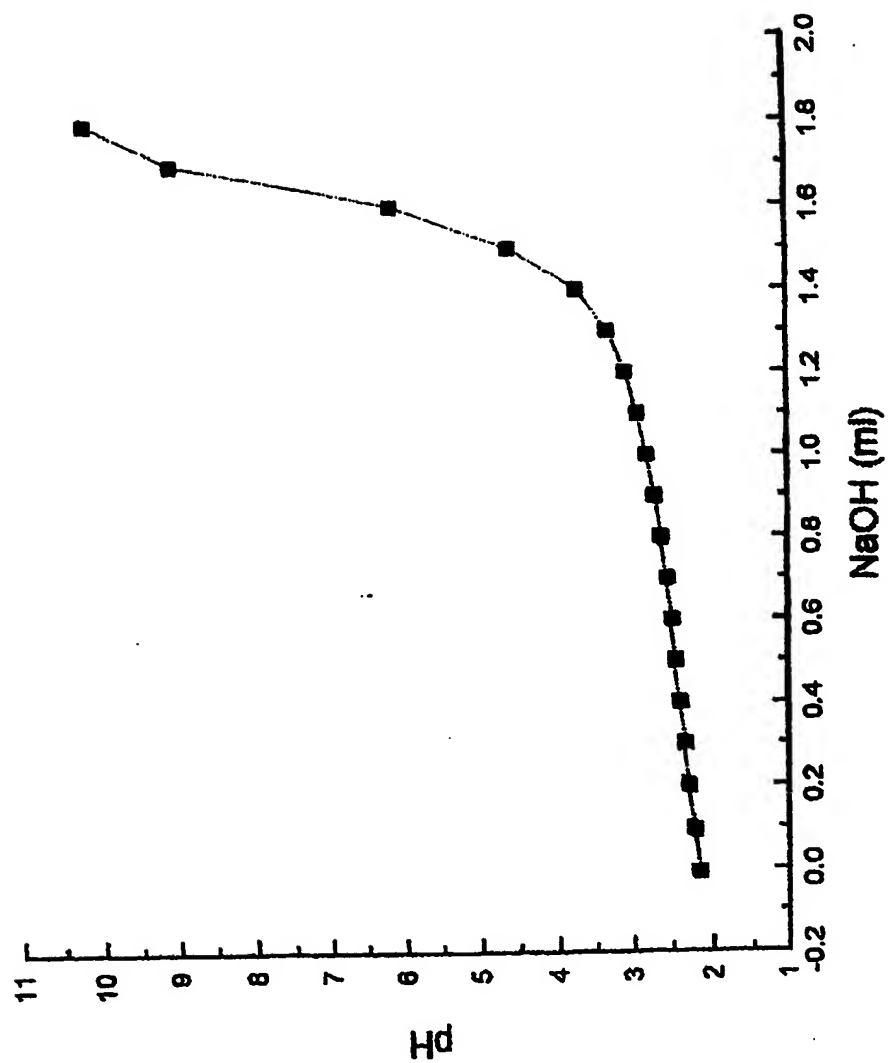


Figure 1

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atcctagcacatactatgtatatacagaagcaaaataacttttggttgaaataaaggttaattactcatacaaatcccttccacacttagttttgttataaaattcta
 taggatcgtgtatgatacatatgttatccggtttttatgaaaaacccaaactttattccaaattaatgagtatgttaaggaaaggtgaaatcnaaaacaataattttaagat
 V G S C M I H M L S V F M K T K L Y S K L M S M L R K G - I K N N I - D
 .taaaaccccaatttttggttaagacaccccaacccctgtatgtaatttagatttcgtaaaaattacgctcagaactggcaccagtatccctaaactgaagattcttaca
 aattttgggggttaaaaccaattctgtgggttgacatacatataaacttaaaagcatttttaacgagcttgaccgtggtcataggggatttgacttcttaagaatgt
 K F W G - N Q F C G L D I H - I - S I F N A S L D R G H R G F D F - E C
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 :gttaagcattactaacgggagtagaatttttagagagcgttaaaatatcttctgtgataattatttaacttatcaagtacagaccaaaatactggagtttaacaggaactgt
 C - A L L T E L E F - R A - N I L - - L L T Y Q V Q T K I L E F N R N C
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 :agaataataattttatataattagggagtagaataaaagagatgaatccattaataatcaattattgttccaatatatacaaatgttgagaagtataatttggttagttaaat
 - N I I L Y N - E - N K E M N P L I S I I V P I Y N V E K Y I G S L V N
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 :ctctattgaaacaaacgaacaaatttttgaggttatttttattgatgacggatcaactgatgaaagcatgcaaattttgaagaaaataaatggcaggcagtgaaacaa
 S L L K Q T N K N F E V I F I D D G S T D E S M Q I L K E I M A G S E Q
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 :aattttcgttcaagttgtgcaacaagtttaataatcaggtgttttatcttcagccaggaatatcgtgtatacttaataatgcaactggagaataatactcttttttgggattcagat
 E F S F K L L Q Q V N Q G L S S A R N I G I L N A T G E Y I F F L D S D
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 :ctttggacagtaattatgggcagtggaagtattttatctgtcaaaagattttgtgtacaagtgagcaaatattaaactgcatgtctaaagatgagataccaacaactgca
 A L D S N Y G H G S I Y R Q K D L C T S E Q I L T A L S K D E I P T A
 :ccagtaaacattgttttgcgagacactaaactttttgtgctaaatgataaaagacacaccttttttaaaacttctattgttaaaatcggtttcnaaaatgaaatca
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 W S F V T K R S V I E K E H D L L F S V G K K F E D N N P T P K V F Y F S

Figure 2B

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:tttgtacaacaataaaggattctaacatatctatatcccttgcgagaccagataaactcattagcggcccttttaagaaaaagcctgctgcggtaaaaacat
iaaacattgttattccctaaagattgtatagatataggaaacgctctgggtctattatgagtaatcgccggaaaaattcttttcggacgacgccatttttgtgta
N I V V I S L R L Y R Y R K R S G S I M S N R P E K F S D D A I F V
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a *tatgacttattagatttttatgatcagtatataaaattcgggaattcgggagcagtagttggtaaaaatagttatgacaacattagcttctttccagattcggaaa
* Y D L L D F Y D Q Y K I R E L G A V V G K I V M T T L A S F P D S K
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iaattgtataatgaattaaatccaatcagaaaaaaagttatttaaagatttatattcaatagaaaaaagacatactaaacgggataaaaaatgtatgtatgtt
L Y N E L N P I R K K V F K D Y I S I E K R H T K R I K M Y V K M Y V
iaagaagaatacaaacctatatatttgaaatgtctgaccattttccatttggaccttcacttatataaaaaattagaataaatac
* ISSI insertion
:ttcttcttattgttgggatataaaacttttacagactggtaaaaggtaaacactggaagtgaatatataatttttaattcttattatg
P S S Y V G Y K L Y R L V K G K H W K - I - F L I L F M

```

Figure 2C

[illegible]

Figure 3A

[illegible]

Figure 3B

Organization of pEPS352

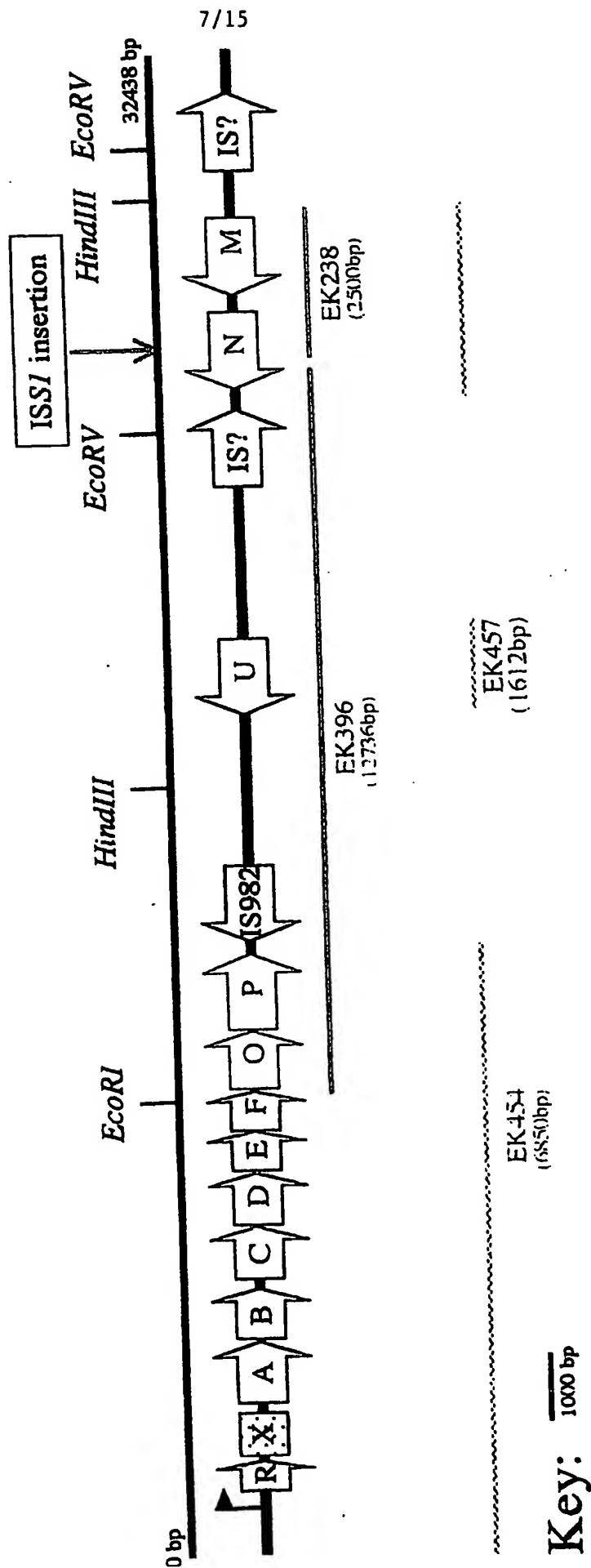


Figure 4

Eps352 Operon sequence EpsR-EpsK (primer EpsOPF-EpsOPR) corrected as of May8, 2000

GTTGA AAAACCCCTACCTTACTTGCACCTAAAGGTTTATTTATATAATCATTTGATATAATATGAAAAATTA AAAAACACCAAAAATGGTTTAACTTAAG
 CAACITTTTGGGATGGAAATGAACGATGATATCCAAAATAAAATATATAGTAACCTATATATACTTTTAATTTTGTGGTTTACC AAAATTGAATTC
 CAAGTTTGTGATTTAATTTTTCAGAAAAATTAAGGTTTCTTACAGAGTTAATAAAAAAGGGATTATATTTATGAATAATTTATTTTACCATCGTCTA
 GTTC AAAACTAAATTA AAAAGTCTTTTAAATCCAAAAGAAATGCTCTCAATTTATTTTCCCTAATAATAAATACTTATTAATAAAAATGGTAGCAGAT
 M N N L F Y H R L
 AAGGAACCTAGTTGAATCAAGTGGTAAATCTGCAAAATCAAAATAGAAAGGGAATGGGTACCCCTAGAAATCTTTTGAATAATTAAGTTGGGAGGAGAAAC
 TTCCCTTGATCAAACTAGTTTACCACTTTAGACGTTTAGTTTATCTTTCCCTTAACCCAAATGGGATCTTTTAAGAAAACCTTATTAATATTC AACCCCTCCTCTTG
 K E L V E S S G K S A N Q I E R E L G Y P R N S L N N Y K L G G E
 CCTCTGGGACAGATTAA TAGGACTATCAGAGATTTTAAATGIGTCTCCAAAATATCTGATGGGTATATAATGATGAGCCTAATGACAGTTCTGCAATTAA
 GGAGACCCCTGTCTAATATATCCTGATAGTCTCAATAAATACACAGAGGTTTATAGACTACCCATATTTAACTACTCGGATTACTGTCAAGACGTTAATT
 P S G T R L I G L S E Y F N V S P K Y L M G I I D E P N D S S A I N
 TCTTTTAAACCTAACTCAAGAAGAGAAAAAGAAATGTTTATTAATTTGTCAAAAATGGCTTTTGTAGATAATCAAAATAGAGTTATACAATAATAA
 AGAAAAATTTTGAGATTGAGTTCTCTCTTTTCTTACAAATATTAACAGTTTACCGAAAAAATCTTATAGTTATCTCAATATGTTATTATTT
 L F K T L T Q E E K K E M F I I C Q K W L F L E Y Q I E L
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 TAAATCCCTCAAAAAAGCCATCACATTTTATTCAAAACCTGTAGTTTATATAGTGGATGTACCGCTTTGTTCACTTGTGTTAAACCGACTTTTTC AAG
 N K F W N I K N I T Y N G E T S E Q L L A E K V
 AAAATCAAGTATTGGCGACTAACCCCTGATGTTGTTTATATGAAGCTCCACTTTTAAATGATAACCAAAAACATTGAAGCAACAGCCTCATGGACTAGTAA
 TTTTAGTTTCATAACCGCTGATTGGGACTACAACAATAATATACCTCGAGGTGAAAAATTACTATTGGTTTGTAACTTCGTTGTCGGAGTACCTGATCATTT
 Q N Q V L A T N P D V V L Y E A P L F N D N Q N I E A T A S W T S N
 TGAGCAACTTATAACAAATTTGGCTAGTACAGGAGCAGAGGTGATGTTCAACCCCTCTCCACCGATTATATGGTGGTGTGTGTACCCCGTACAAGAAGAA
 ACTCGTTGAATATTGTTAAACCGATCATGTCTCTGCTCCACTATCAAGTTGGGAGAGGTGGCTAAATACCAACCAACACACATGGGGCATGTTCTTCTT
 E Q L I T N L A S T G A E V I V Q P S P I Y G G V V Y P V Q E E
 CAGTTTAAACAATCTTATCTACAAAGTATCCCTATATAGACTACTGGGCTAGTTACCCAGACAAAAATTTCTGATGAATGAAGGGGCTGGTTTCTGATG
 GTC AAAATTTGTTAGAAAATAGATGTTTTCATAGGGATATATCTGATGACCCGATCAATGGGTCTGTTTAAAGACTACTTTTACTTCCCGACCAAGACTAC
 Q F K Q S L S T K Y P Y I D Y W A S Y P D K N S D E M K G L V S D

Figure 5A

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ATGGAGTATATAGAACATTAATGCTTCGGGGAATAAGGTTGGCTAGATTATATTACTAAATATTTTACAGCAAACTAAATTAAGTTATATAATAACAATTT
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 D G V Y R T L N A S G N K V W L D Y I T K Y F T A N
 ATAAATATTGGAGAGAATAATGCAGGAAACACAGGAACAGACGATTGATTAAAGAGGATTTTAAATATTTCGCAAAAGGTTAGGTTTAAATATATTT
 TAATTTATAACCTCTTCTTACGTCCTTTGTGTCCTTGTCTGCTGAACATAATCTCCCTTAAATTTTAAATAAGCGTTTCCAAATCCAAATTTATAATAA
 M Q E T Q E Q T I D L R G I F K I I R K R L G L I L F
 AGTGCTTAAATAGTCACAATATTAGGGAGCATCTACACATTTTATAGCCTCCCGAGTTTACACAGCTCAACTCAACTTGTCGTTAAACTACCAATTT
 TCACGAAATTTATCAGTGTATAAATCCCTCGTAGATGTGTAAAAATATCGGAGGGTCAAAATGTGCGGAGTTGAGTTGAACAGCAATTTTGATGGTTTAA
 S A L I V T I L G S I Y T F I A S P V Y T A S T Q L V V K L P N
 CGGAGCATTCAGCAGCCTACGCTGGAGAAGTGACCGGGAATATTCAAAATGGCGAACACAAATTAACCAAGTTATGTTAGTCCAGTCATTTTAGATAAAGT
 GCCTCGTAAGTCGTCGGATCGGACCTCTTCACTGGCCCTTATAAGTTTACCGCTTGTTAAATTTGGTTCAATAAACAAATCAGGTCAATAAATCTATTTCA
 S E H S A A Y A G E V T G N I Q M A N T I N Q V I V S P V I L D K V
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 AGTTTCATTAATTTAGATAGACTACCGAGAAAGGTTTGTTCATATGTCATCGTTTAGTTGTCTAAGTGTTCATATATCGGAATGACAATTTTATAAGA
 Q S N L N L S D G S F Q K Q V T V A N Q T D S Q V I T L T V K Y S
 AATCCTTACATTGCACAAAAGATTGCAGACGAGACTGCTAAAATTTTGTAGTTTCAGATGCAGCAAACTATTGAATGTTACTAACTTAATATCTATCCA
 TTAGGAATGTAACTGTTTCTAACGTCCTGCTGACGATTTTTAAATCAAGTCTACGTCGTTTGTGATACTTCAATGATTGCAATTAAGATAGGT
 N P Y I A Q K I A D E T A K I F S S D A A K L L N V T N V N I L S
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 K A K A Q T T P I S P K P K L Y L A I S V I A G L V L G L A I A L L
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 CTTCCCTTAATAAACTATTGTTTAAATTTTCTTCTATATACTTCGAGACCCGAGTGCCAGAACCACTTGTTCGATACGAGTTTACTCACTAAAA
 K E L F D N K I N K E E D I E A L G L T V L G V T S Y A Q M S D F
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 N K N T N K N G T Q S G T K S S P P S D H E V N R S S K R N K R
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 TCAAGCTCCTACCGATTTTATTTTCTCGTATCTGTGTAGCAATATAATGTTGTCACAGTTAGGAGTTAGTGGAATAAGGCTTGTATTATAGCAAGCTA
 M A K N K R S I D N N R Y I I T S V N P Q S P I S E Q Y R S I

Figure 5B

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Figure 5C

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AAGAACTTTTATTAATTTGAGGGAGCTCAACCTATTTTGGTCCACCCTGAGCGTAATAGCGGAATCATTTGAGAACCTTGATATATTTGA
 TTCTTTGAAAAATATTAAGTTAACCTCCCTGAAGTTGGATAAAACCCAGGTGGACTCGCATATATCGCCTTAGTAACCTCTTGGACTATATAAACT
 K E L F Y N I Q L E G L Q P I L V H P E R N S G I I E N P D I L F D
 TTTTATTGAACAAGGAGTACTAAGTCAGATAACAGCTTCAAGTGTCACTGGTCAATTTTGGTAAATAATACAAAAGCTGTCAATTAATAATGATAGAAAAC
 AAAATAACTTGTCTCATGATTCAGTCTATTGTGCAAGTTCACAGTCCAGTAAACCATTTTATTATGTTTTCGACAGTAAATTTACTATCTTTTG
 F I E Q G V L S Q I T A S S V T G H F G K K I Q K L S F K M I E N
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 H L T H F V A S D A H N V T S R A F K M K E A F E I I E D S Y G S
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 L F M E F F E D A S S P E S G E P K L V E L K N F
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 I L N A E Q Y L E L N P D V K A A Y H A N G N K L E N D P R V T K
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 F E A K E Y G K R L A Y L L M C K P G I T G Y W T T H G R S K V L

Figure 5D

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 AAAAGGAGTTGCTCGTCTAAATCTTGAGATAATAGAGGTGATGTTTCGTGGTTTTTACTATAGTTCGAAGATCATGAGTGTAAACATGTTTCATAATTG
 F P Q R A D L E L Y Y L Q Y H S T K N D I K L L V L T I V Q S I N
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 CCTAGCCTGCGTATAATTTTACTTTTATCGTAATCATCCAAAGTCCGCCACCGGTAAACTGTGTGGACATAAACCAATTTTTTCAAAAACCTTTTGCTTC
 G S D A Y M K I A L V G S S G G H L T H L Y L L K K F W E N E
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 K F I V Q W E E L K K V Y P K A I N L G G I F M I F V T V G T H E
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 M Q V L Q L G K I P I V V P R Q M K F D E H I N D H Q L W V S K Q
 GTTGTGAAAAAGGGATACCTCATGATTGTTGTGGGAAGATGTTGAAGACATTTCTCGAAAAATATTATTAGTTCCAAAATTTTCAGATACCTTACAAAAAAAATG
 CAACACTTTTCCCTATGAGTAACCTAAACACCGCTTCTCAACTTCTGTAAGAGCTTTTATATAAATAATCAAGGTTTTTAAAGTCTATGGAATGTTTTTAC
 V V K K G Y S L I L C E D V E D I L E N I I S S K I S D T L Q K N

Figure 5E

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TAARTCACACACCTGAATTCATAAAAAATTATTCAGTGTCTGAAATTTACAGCTATTTATAAAAGTCAGAAGATRTGATACCCAAAAGTAATACACTATTGC
 ATTAGTGTGTGACTTAAGTATTTAATAAGTCACGACTTTAAATGGTCGATAAATATTTTTCACCTCTCTATACATATGGTTTTCATTATGTGATAACG
 V N H N T E F I K L F S A E I Y Q L F I K S E K I M I P K V I H Y C
 TGGTTCGGAGGGCAACCTTTACCAGAACTCGCGTAAATGTATGAAAGTTGGAGAAGGTTTGTGTCAGATTATGAAATAAAACAATGGTCTGAGAAA
 ACCAAGCCTCCCGTTGGAAATGGTCTTAGACGCGATTTTACATAACTTTCAACCTCTCCAAAACAGGCTAAATACCTTTATTTGTTACCAGACTCTTTT
 W F G G Q P L P E S A L K C I E S W R R F C P D Y E I K Q W S E K N
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 Y D V N K I Q Y I K E A Y Q E K K F A F V T D V A R L D I I W N E
 AGCGGTATATATCTTGACACGGATGTAGAGCTTATAAAATCTCTTGATGAATCTGTGATAATAGTTTATATTTAGGAATGGAAGAGCTGGTAGAGTA
 TCCGCCATATATAGAACTGTGCCCTACATCTCGAATATTTTAGAGAACTACTTAACGACATATATCAAAATATAAATCCCTTACCTTCTCGACCATCTCAT
 G G I Y L D T D V E L I K S L D E L L Y N S L Y L G M E R A G R V
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 TTATGCCCCAAATCCAAACCTCGACTTCATTTAGTAGGTTAAACACTCTCGATTAATCTTAACATATGATTAAGGAAAAAGTCGTTACTATATATAT
 N T G L G F G A E V N H P I V R A N L E L Y T N I P F S G N D N I T
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 GAACACACTGGATATGCTGCTAGAAAACTTTTATACAGATTTTGTGTTACTTTAAGTTGTATATCTATTGCGGTTATTAATAATGATGACTTAT
 C V T Y T T N L L K K Y G L K N N N E I Q H I D N A I I L P T E Y
 TTTATGCTCCTAAGTTTGAACAAATCGATTAAAAATACGGAATAACTTACTCCATCCATCCTACTATGATATGAGTTGGAAGATAAGAGAGATAAA
 AAATACAGGAGATTCAAAACTTTGTTAGCTAAATTTTATGCTAAATTTTATGCTTTTATGAATGAGGTAGGTAGTACTATATCAACCTTTCTATTTCTCTCTATTT
 L C P L S F E T N R L K I T E N T Y S I H Y D M S W K D K R D K
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 AAAAATCTGAATTTTATGTTGAATCTTTTACCCTCCATCCACTACTAAAAATACCTTTTCAATAATTTTCTTAACCTTTTATTAATAGTACTTATTTTATG
 F L R L K I Q L R K W V G D D F Y E K V I K R I G K M N K I T
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 GACTGTTCTCTACTCTCAATAACGGAATACACAGCATTAATAATCTATAAAATTTATGCTTAAATTAACGCAAGTCGTATGAGAAAAATCGTAC
 M T R E M R V I A L C V V I L E Y L N N T G L I A S S A Y S F S M
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 A S T I L L S Y I L F C K K R K G F S L K E I I V L L I P F I F V

Figure 5F

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 CGAAAATATTTAGCATACCTCAAAATCCCTAAATAGGTTGGATTAACCGTTACTACTCGAAAATCCATATCGCTATCGGAATAATATAAACTCATGACTTT
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 ATCCCTTATTACTACAAATTTTATGTTACAAATCTATGTCGTATAGAAAGTTTCAAACGATCGTTTTCCTTAAACAAAATGTAAACAAAATAAACCATTTGAA
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 GAAAAAGTATAAAAAAGAAATCTCTTTTGTGTTGATCCACGTTTCAAATCAATTAATACATACATAAAAAATTAACGTAATGTCTTTGTAGTAAAAA
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 CTAACCTCCTCTGTTTCATAGGCAATATCAAGGACAAAATGTTACATCTCC

Figure 5G

15/15

Sequense of EpsU (start and stop codons are underlined) 1612bp total
here but 1412 from start codon to stop codon

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Figure 6

SEQUENCE LISTING

<110> Trempy, Janine, et al.

<120> BIOPOLYMER THICKNER

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<150> 60/241,098

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cagaaaaaatt aaggttttttc ttacagaagt taataaaaaa agggattata ttt atg      176
                                     Met
                                     1

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Asn Asn Leu Phe Tyr His Arg Leu Lys Glu Leu Val Glu Ser Ser Gly
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aaa tct gca aat caa ata gaa agg gaa ttg ggt tac cct aga aat tct      272
Lys Ser Ala Asn Gln Ile Glu Arg Glu Leu Gly Tyr Pro Arg Asn Ser
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Leu Asn Asn Tyr Lys Leu Gly Gly Glu Pro Ser Gly Thr Arg Leu Ile
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gga cta tca gag tat ttt aat gtg tct cca aaa tat ctg atg ggt ata      368
Gly Leu Ser Glu Tyr Phe Asn Val Ser Pro Lys Tyr Leu Met Gly Ile
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Phe Leu Glu Tyr Gln Ile Glu Leu
                    100                      105

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                        Asn Lys Phe Trp Asn Ile Lys Asn Ile Thr Tyr Asn
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Gly Glu Thr Ser Glu Gln Leu Leu Ala Glu Lys Val Gln Asn Gln Val
                    120                      125                      130

ttg gcg act aac cct gat gtt gtt tta tat gaa gct cca ctt ttt aat      659
Leu Ala Thr Asn Pro Asp Val Val Leu Tyr Glu Ala Pro Leu Phe Asn
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gat aac caa aac att gaa gca aca gcc tca tgg act agt aat gag caa      707
Asp Asn Gln Asn Ile Glu Ala Thr Ala Ser Trp Thr Ser Asn Glu Gln
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ctt ata aca aat ttg gct agt aca gga gca gag gtg ata gtt caa ccc      755
Leu Ile Thr Asn Leu Ala Ser Thr Gly Ala Glu Val Ile Val Gln Pro
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tct cca ccg att tat ggt ggt gtt gtg tac ccc gta caa gaa gaa cag      803
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Ser Tyr Pro Asp Lys Asn Ser Asp Glu Met Lys Gly Leu Val Ser Asp	
215 220 225 230	
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Asp Gly Val Tyr Arg Thr Leu Asn Ala Ser Gly Asn Lys Val Trp Leu	
235 240 245	
gat tat att act aaa tat ttt aca gca aac taattaagtt ataaataaca	997
Asp Tyr Ile Thr Lys Tyr Phe Thr Ala Asn	
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260 265	
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Leu Asp Lys Val Gln Ser Asn Leu Asn Leu Ser Asp Gly Ser Phe Gln	
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Thr Val Lys Tyr Ser Asn Pro Tyr Ile Ala Gln Lys Ile Ala Asp Glu	
380 385 390	
act gct aaa att ttt agt tca gat gca gca aaa cta ttg aat gtt act	1481
Thr Ala Lys Ile Phe Ser Ser Asp Ala Ala Lys Leu Leu Asn Val Thr	
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415 420 425	

cct Pro	aaa Lys	cct Pro	aaa Lys	ttg Leu	tat Tyr	tta Leu	gcg Ala	ata Ile	tct Ser	gtt Val	ata Ile	gcc Ala	gga Gly	cta Leu	gtt Val	1577	
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			460				465						470				
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caa	tta	cca	att	gaa	gtt	tta	cca	gga	caa	gag	gtg	aga	ata	tat	ggt	2797		
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Asp	Leu	Leu	Lys	Glu	Phe	Ser	Glu	Gly	Lys	Leu	Leu	Thr	Ala	Ala	Gly			
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Thr	Ser	Ser	Tyr	Ile	Leu	Ile	Glu	Phe	Pro	Ser	Asn	His	Val	Pro	Ala			
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Tyr	Ala	Lys	Glu	Leu	Phe	Tyr	Asn	Ile	Gln	Leu	Glu	Gly	Leu	Gln	Pro			
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Ile	Leu	Val	His	Pro	Glu	Arg	Asn	Ser	Gly	Ile	Ile	Glu	Asn	Pro	Asp			
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Ile	Leu	Phe	Asp	Phe	Ile	Glu	Gln	Gly	Val	Leu	Ser	Gln	Ile	Thr	Ala			
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Asn Val Thr Ser Arg Ala Phe Lys Met Lys Glu Ala Phe Glu Ile Ile	
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Glu Asp Ser Tyr Gly Ser Asp Val Ser Arg Met Phe Gln Asn Asn Ala	
940 945 950	
gag tca gtg att tta aac gaa agt ttt tat caa gaa aaa cca aca aag	3277
Glu Ser Val Ile Leu Asn Glu Ser Phe Tyr Gln Glu Lys Pro Thr Lys	
955 960 965	
atc aaa aca aag aaa ttt tta gga tta ttt taa aaggattaaa aggagtaa	3330
Ile Lys Thr Lys Lys Phe Leu Gly Leu Phe	
970 975	
a atg gaa ttt ttt gag gat gcc tca tca cct gaa tcg gga gag cct aag	3379
Met Glu Phe Phe Glu Asp Ala Ser Ser Pro Glu Ser Gly Glu Pro Lys	
980 985 990 995	
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Leu Val Glu Leu Lys Asn Phe Ser Tyr Arg Glu Leu Ile Ile Lys Arg	
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Ala Ala Ala Leu Leu Tyr Ile Pro Tyr Lys Met Ser Ser Lys Lys Asp	
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Gln Gly Pro Met Phe Tyr Lys Gln Lys Arg Tyr Gly Lys Asn Gly Lys	
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Ile Phe Tyr Ile Leu Lys Phe Arg Thr Met Ile Leu Asn Ala Glu Gln	
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Tyr Leu Glu Leu Asn Pro Asp Val Lys Ala Ala Tyr His Ala Asn Gly	
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Asn Lys Leu Glu Asn Asp Pro Arg Val Thr Lys Ile Gly Ser Phe Ile	
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Arg Arg His Ser Ile Asp Glu Leu Pro Gln Phe Ile Asn Val Leu Lys	
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Gly Asp Met Ser Leu Val Gly Pro Arg Pro Ile Leu Leu Phe Glu Ala	
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Lys Glu Tyr Gly Lys Arg Leu Ala Tyr Leu Leu Met Cys Lys Pro Gly	
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Ile Thr Gly Tyr Trp Thr Thr His Gly Arg Ser Lys Val Leu Phe Pro	
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Gln Arg Ala Asp Leu Glu Leu Tyr Tyr Leu Gln Tyr His Ser Thr Lys	
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Asn Asp Ile Lys Leu Leu Val Leu Thr Ile Val Gln Ser Ile Asn Gly	
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Ser Asp Ala Tyr Met Lys Ile Ala Leu Val Gly Ser Ser Gly	
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Gly His Leu Thr His Leu Tyr Leu Leu Lys Lys Phe Trp Glu Asn Glu	
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Lys Glu Glu Arg Phe Tyr Pro Cys Tyr Tyr Pro Thr Asn Arg Asn Val	
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Glu Lys Pro Asp Leu Ile Ile Ser Ser Gly Ala Ala Val Ala Val Pro	
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Phe Phe Trp Leu Gly Lys Leu Phe Gly Ala Lys Thr Val Tyr Ile Glu	
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ata ttt gac cgg atc gat aaa cca acc tta aca gga aaa tta gtt tat	4387
Ile Phe Asp Arg Ile Asp Lys Pro Thr Leu Thr Gly Lys Leu Val Tyr	
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cca gtt act gat aag ttt ata gtt caa tgg gaa gag tta aaa aaa gtt	4435
Pro Val Thr Asp Lys Phe Ile Val Gln Trp Glu Glu Leu Lys Lys Val	
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Tyr Pro Lys Ala Ile Asn Leu Gly Gly Ile Phe	
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 Phe Cys Pro Asp Tyr Glu Ile Lys Gln Trp Ser Glu Lys Asn Tyr Asp
 1390 1395 1400
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 Val Asn Lys Ile Gln Tyr Ile Lys Glu Ala Tyr Gln Glu Lys Lys Phe
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 gct ttt gtc acg gat gtt gca agg ctc gat ata att tgg aat gaa ggc 5204
 Ala Phe Val Thr Asp Val Ala Arg Leu Asp Ile Ile Trp Asn Glu Gly
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 Gly Ile Tyr Leu Asp Thr Asp Val Glu Leu Ile Lys Ser Leu Asp Glu
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 Leu Leu Tyr Asn Ser Leu Tyr Leu Gly Met Glu Arg Ala Gly Arg Val
 1455 1460 1465
 aat acg ggt tta ggg ttt gga gct gaa gta aat cat cca att gtg aga 5348
 Asn Thr Gly Leu Gly Phe Gly Ala Glu Val Asn His Pro Ile Val Arg
 1470 1475 1480
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 Ala Asn Leu Glu Leu Tyr Thr Asn Ile Pro Phe Ser Gly Asn Asp Asn
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 Lys Asn Asn Asn Glu Ile Gln His Ile Asp Asn Ala Ile Ile Leu Pro
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 Thr Glu Tyr Leu Cys Pro Leu Ser Phe Glu Thr Asn Arg Leu Lys Ile
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Thr Glu Asn Thr Tyr Ser Ile His His Tyr Asp Met Ser Trp Lys Asp	
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Lys Arg Asp Lys Phe Leu Arg Leu Lys Ile Gln Leu Arg Lys Trp Val	
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Gly Asp Asp Phe Tyr Glu Lys Val Ile Lys Arg Ile Gly Lys	
1580 1585 1590	
atg aat aaa ata acc atg aca aga gag atg aga gtt att gcc tta tgt	5734
Met Asn Lys Ile Thr Met Thr Arg Glu Met Arg Val Ile Ala Leu Cys	
1595 1600 1605 1610	
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Val Val Ile Leu Glu Tyr Leu Asn Asn Thr Gly Leu Ile Ala Ser Ser	
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gca tac tct ttt agc atg gcg agt aca atc ctc tta tcc tat atc tta	5830
Ala Tyr Ser Phe Ser Met Ala Ser Thr Ile Leu Leu Ser Tyr Ile Leu	
1630 1635 1640	
ttc tgt aaa aaa aga aaa gga ttt tct tta aag gag att att gta cta	5878
Phe Cys Lys Lys Arg Lys Gly Phe Ser Leu Lys Glu Ile Ile Val Leu	
1645 1650 1655	
cta att cca ttt att ttt gta gtt tta aat cgt gat cct agt aat ttc	5926
Leu Ile Pro Phe Ile Phe Val Val Leu Asn Arg Asp Pro Ser Asn Phe	
1660 1665 1670	
agt tta ggg tta atg tgg ata ctc tat ttt atg tta agt aag tcg gaa	5974
Ser Leu Gly Leu Met Trp Ile Leu Tyr Phe Met Leu Ser Lys Ser Glu	
1675 1680 1685 1690	
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Ile Asp Leu Lys Lys Val Met Lys Thr Phe Phe Val Thr Ser Ser Val	
1695 1700 1705	
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Cys Phe Ile Leu Thr Ile Val Leu Tyr Leu Ile Met Ser Leu Asn Lys	
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Ser Ser Asp Met Ile Met Trp Arg Gly Asp Ala Phe Ile Asn Arg Met	
1725 1730 1735	
agt tta gga ttt atc caa ccg aat ttt gca atg atg agc ttt tta ggt	6166
Ser Leu Gly Phe Ile Gln Pro Asn Phe Ala Met Met Ser Phe Leu Gly	
1740 1745 1750	
ata gcg ata gcc tta tta tat ttg agt act gaa aga caa aga ata act	6214
Ile Ala Ile Ala Leu Leu Tyr Leu Ser Thr Glu Arg Gln Arg Ile Thr	
1755 1760 1765 1770	
ata att ttt att gcc att gta act ttt att ata ttt tac ttt act caa	6262
Ile Ile Phe Ile Ala Ile Val Thr Phe Ile Ile Phe Tyr Phe Thr Gln	
1775 1780 1785	

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 Ser Arg Thr Ser Gly Tyr Ile Leu Phe Phe Ile Leu Ser Ile Leu Phe
 1790 1795 1800

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 Val Ser Ser Lys Lys Thr Lys Lys Gln Val Ser Asn Phe Glu Lys Arg
 1805 1810 1815

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 Ser Ile Thr Val Leu Pro Leu Leu Leu Leu Ile Ile Ser Tyr Ser Leu
 1820 1825 1830

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 Leu Lys Leu Pro Ile Asn Gln Tyr Ile Asn Ser Leu Leu Ser Gly Arg
 1835 1840 1845 1850

ctg gcg ctt tat caa gag att tat tct aca ttt ggt ata cat ttg ata 6502
 Leu Ala Leu Tyr Gln Glu Ile Tyr Ser Thr Phe Gly Ile His Leu Ile
 1855 1860 1865

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 Gly Asn Asn Asp Val Lys Asn Thr Met Leu Asp Thr Ala Tyr Leu Gln
 1870 1875 1880

agt ttg cta gca aaa gga att ttg ttt aca ttg ttt tta ttt gta act 6598
 Ser Leu Leu Ala Lys Gly Ile Leu Phe Thr Leu Phe Leu Phe Val Thr
 1885 1890 1895

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 Phe Phe Phe Ile Phe Phe Leu Lys Arg Lys Thr Gln Thr Arg Leu Gln
 1900 1905 1910

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 Ser Leu Val Ile Met Met Tyr Phe Leu Ile Ala Phe Thr Glu Thr Ser
 1915 1920 1925 1930

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 Phe Phe Arg Phe Val Ile Leu Phe Pro Val Leu Met Val Ile Met Asp
 1935 1940 1945

cag aaa gag gct aat aaa gta ata gaa aag gtg gca tag tgagtattaa 6791
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 35 40 45
 Ile Gly Leu Ser Glu Tyr Phe Asn Val Ser Pro Lys Tyr Leu Met Gly
 50 55 60

Ile Ile Asp Glu Pro Asn Asp Ser Ser Ala Ile Asn Leu Phe Lys Thr
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 Pro Asp Val Val Leu Tyr Glu Ala Pro Leu Phe Asn Asp Asn Gln Asn
 35 40 45
 Ile Glu Ala Thr Ala Ser Trp Thr Ser Asn Glu Gln Leu Ile Thr Asn
 50 55 60
 Leu Ala Ser Thr Gly Ala Glu Val Ile Val Gln Pro Ser Pro Pro Ile
 65 70 75 80
 Tyr Gly Gly Val Val Tyr Pro Val Gln Glu Glu Gln Phe Lys Gln Ser
 85 90 95
 Leu Ser Thr Lys Tyr Pro Tyr Ile Asp Tyr Trp Ala Ser Tyr Pro Asp
 100 105 110
 Lys Asn Ser Asp Glu Met Lys Gly Leu Val Ser Asp Asp Gly Val Tyr
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 Lys Tyr Phe Thr Ala Asn
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 35 40 45
 Thr Ala Ser Thr Gln Leu Val Val Lys Leu Pro Asn Ser Glu His Ser
 50 55 60
 Ala Ala Tyr Ala Gly Glu Val Thr Gly Asn Ile Gln Met Ala Asn Thr
 65 70 75 80
 Ile Asn Gln Val Ile Val Ser Pro Val Ile Leu Asp Lys Val Gln Ser
 85 90 95
 Asn Leu Asn Leu Ser Asp Gly Ser Phe Gln Lys Gln Val Thr Val Ala
 100 105 110
 Asn Gln Thr Asp Ser Gln Val Ile Thr Leu Thr Val Lys Tyr Ser Asn
 115 120 125
 Pro Tyr Ile Ala Gln Lys Ile Ala Asp Glu Thr Ala Lys Ile Phe Ser
 130 135 140
 Ser Asp Ala Ala Lys Leu Leu Asn Val Thr Asn Val Asn Ile Leu Ser

145					150					155				160	
Lys	Ala	Lys	Ala	Gln	Thr	Thr	Pro	Ile	Ser	Pro	Lys	Pro	Lys	Leu	Tyr
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Leu	Ala	Ile	Ser	Val	Ile	Ala	Gly	Leu	Val	Leu	Gly	Leu	Ala	Ile	Ala
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Leu	Leu	Lys	Glu	Leu	Phe	Asp	Asn	Lys	Ile	Asn	Lys	Glu	Glu	Asp	Ile
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Glu	Ala	Leu	Gly	Leu	Thr	Val	Leu	Gly	Val	Thr	Ser	Tyr	Ala	Gln	Met
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Thr	Thr	Ile	Asp	Phe	Lys	Met	Ala	Asp	Gln	Gly	Ile	Lys	Ser	Phe	Leu
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Ile	Ala	Val	Ala	Phe	Ala	Gln	Gln	Gly	Lys	Lys	Val	Leu	Leu	Ile	Asp
65					70					75					80
Gly	Asp	Leu	Arg	Lys	Pro	Thr	Val	Asn	Ile	Thr	Phe	Lys	Val	Gln	Asn
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Arg	Val	Gly	Leu	Thr	Asn	Ile	Leu	Met	His	Gln	Ser	Ser	Ile	Glu	Asp
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Lys	Asn	Leu	Ile	Asp	Ser	Val	Ser	Asp	Leu	Phe	Asp	Val	Val	Leu	Ile
145				150					155						160
Asp	Thr	Pro	Thr	Leu	Ser	Ala	Val	Thr	Asp	Ala	Gln	Ile	Leu	Ser	Ser
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Tyr	Val	Gly	Gly	Ala	Val	Ile	Val	Val	Arg	Ala	Tyr	Glu	Thr	Lys	Lys
		180					185					190			
Glu	Ser	Leu	Ala	Lys	Thr	Lys	Lys	Met	Leu	Glu	Gln	Val	Asn	Thr	Asn
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Ile	Leu	Gly	Val	Val	Leu	His	Gly	Val	Asn	Ser	Ser	Glu	Ser	Pro	Ser
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Glu Val Leu Pro Gly Gln Glu Val Arg Ile Tyr Gly Asp Leu Leu Lys
      50           55           60
Glu Phe Ser Glu Gly Lys Leu Leu Thr Ala Ala Gly Thr Ser Ser Tyr
      65           70           75           80
Ile Leu Ile Glu Phe Pro Ser Asn His Val Pro Ala Tyr Ala Lys Glu
      85           90           95
Leu Phe Tyr Asn Ile Gln Leu Glu Gly Leu Gln Pro Ile Leu Val His
      100          105          110
Pro Glu Arg Asn Ser Gly Ile Ile Glu Asn Pro Asp Ile Leu Phe Asp
      115          120          125
Phe Ile Glu Gln Gly Val Leu Ser Gln Ile Thr Ala Ser Ser Val Thr
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Gly His Phe Gly Lys Lys Ile Gln Lys Leu Ser Phe Lys Met Ile Glu
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Asn His Leu Thr His Phe Val Ala Ser Asp Ala His Asn Val Thr Ser
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Arg Ala Phe Lys Met Lys Glu Ala Phe Glu Ile Ile Glu Asp Ser Tyr
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Gly Ser Asp Val Ser Arg Met Phe Gln Asn Asn Ala Glu Ser Val Ile
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<212> PRT

<213> Lactococcus lactis

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Ala Ala Ala Leu Leu Tyr Ile Pro Tyr Lys Met Ser Ser Lys Lys Asp
      50           55           60
Gln Gly Pro Met Phe Tyr Lys Gln Lys Arg Tyr Gly Lys Asn Gly Lys
      65           70           75           80
Ile Phe Tyr Ile Leu Lys Phe Arg Thr Met Ile Leu Asn Ala Glu Gln
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Tyr Leu Glu Leu Asn Pro Asp Val Lys Ala Ala Tyr His Ala Asn Gly
      100          105          110
Asn Lys Leu Glu Asn Asp Pro Arg Val Thr Lys Ile Gly Ser Phe Ile
      115          120          125
Arg Arg His Ser Ile Asp Glu Leu Pro Gln Phe Ile Asn Val Leu Lys
      130          135          140
Gly Asp Met Ser Leu Val Gly Pro Arg Pro Ile Leu Leu Phe Glu Ala
      145          150          155          160
Lys Glu Tyr Gly Lys Arg Leu Ala Tyr Leu Leu Met Cys Lys Pro Gly
      165          170          175
Ile Thr Gly Tyr Trp Thr Thr His Gly Arg Ser Lys Val Leu Phe Pro
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Gln Arg Ala Asp Leu Glu Leu Tyr Tyr Leu Gln Tyr His Ser Thr Lys
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 Ser Asp Ala Tyr
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 35 40 45
 Pro Cys Tyr Tyr Pro Thr Asn Arg Asn Val Lys Asn Thr Ile Lys Asn
 50 55 60
 Thr Ile Leu Ala Phe Lys Ile Leu Arg Lys Glu Lys Pro Asp Leu Ile
 65 70 75 80
 Ile Ser Ser Gly Ala Ala Val Ala Val Pro Phe Phe Trp Leu Gly Lys
 85 90 95
 Leu Phe Gly Ala Lys Thr Val Tyr Ile Glu Ile Phe Asp Arg Ile Asp
 100 105 110
 Lys Pro Thr Leu Thr Gly Lys Leu Val Tyr Pro Val Thr Asp Lys Phe
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 35 40 45
 Ile Gln Tyr Ile Lys Glu Ala Tyr Gln Glu Lys Lys Phe Ala Phe Val
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 Thr Asp Val Ala Arg Leu Asp Ile Ile Trp Asn Glu Gly Gly Ile Tyr
 65 70 75 80
 Leu Asp Thr Asp Val Glu Leu Ile Lys Ser Leu Asp Glu Leu Leu Tyr
 85 90 95
 Asn Ser Leu Tyr Leu Gly Met Glu Arg Ala Gly Arg Val Asn Thr Gly
 100 105 110
 Leu Gly Phe Gly Ala Glu Val Asn His Pro Ile Val Arg Ala Asn Leu
 115 120 125
 Glu Leu Tyr Thr Asn Ile Pro Phe Ser Gly Asn Asp Asn Ile Thr Cys
 130 135 140
 Val Thr Tyr Thr Thr Asn Leu Leu Lys Lys Tyr Gly Leu Lys Asn Asn

145		150		155		160
Asn Glu Ile Gln His Ile Asp Asn Ala Ile Ile Leu Pro Thr Glu Tyr						
	165		170			175
Leu Cys Pro Leu Ser Phe Glu Thr Asn Arg Leu Lys Ile Thr Glu Asn						
	180		185			190
Thr Tyr Ser Ile His His Tyr Asp Met Ser Trp Lys Asp Lys Arg Asp						
	195		200			205
Lys Phe Leu Arg Leu Lys Ile Gln Leu Arg Lys Trp Val Gly Asp Asp						
	210		215			220
Phe Tyr Glu Lys Val Ile Lys Arg Ile Gly Lys						
225		230				235

<210> 10

<211> 364

<212> PRT

<213> Lactococcus lactis

<400> 10

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	20		25			30
Ala Tyr Ser Phe Ser Met Ala Ser Thr Ile Leu Leu Ser Tyr Ile Leu						
	35		40			45
Phe Cys Lys Lys Arg Lys Gly Phe Ser Leu Lys Glu Ile Ile Val Leu						
	50		55			60
Leu Ile Pro Phe Ile Phe Val Val Leu Asn Arg Asp Pro Ser Asn Phe						
	65		70			75
Ser Leu Gly Leu Met Trp Ile Leu Tyr Phe Met Leu Ser Lys Ser Glu						
		85		90		95
Ile Asp Leu Lys Lys Val Met Lys Thr Phe Phe Val Thr Ser Ser Val						
	100		105			110
Cys Phe Ile Leu Thr Ile Val Leu Tyr Leu Ile Met Ser Leu Asn Lys						
	115		120			125
Ser Ser Asp Met Ile Met Trp Arg Gly Asp Ala Phe Ile Asn Arg Met						
	130		135			140
Ser Leu Gly Phe Ile Gln Pro Asn Phe Ala Met Met Ser Phe Leu Gly						
145		150		155		160
Ile Ala Ile Ala Leu Leu Tyr Leu Ser Thr Glu Arg Gln Arg Ile Thr						
	165		170			175
Ile Ile Phe Ile Ala Ile Val Thr Phe Ile Ile Phe Tyr Phe Thr Gln						
	180		185			190
Ser Arg Thr Ser Gly Tyr Ile Leu Phe Phe Ile Leu Ser Ile Leu Phe						
	195		200			205
Val Ser Ser Lys Lys Thr Lys Lys Gln Val Ser Asn Phe Glu Lys Arg						
	210		215			220
Ser Ile Thr Val Leu Pro Leu Leu Leu Ile Ser Tyr Ser Leu						
225		230		235		240
Leu Lys Leu Pro Ile Asn Gln Tyr Ile Asn Ser Leu Leu Ser Gly Arg						
	245		250			255
Leu Ala Leu Tyr Gln Glu Ile Tyr Ser Thr Phe Gly Ile His Leu Ile						
	260		265			270
Gly Asn Asn Asp Val Lys Asn Thr Met Leu Asp Thr Ala Tyr Leu Gln						
	275		280			285
Ser Leu Leu Ala Lys Gly Ile Leu Phe Thr Leu Phe Leu Phe Val Thr						
	290		295			300
Phe Phe Phe Ile Phe Phe Leu Lys Arg Lys Thr Gln Thr Arg Leu Gln						
305		310		315		320
Ser Leu Val Ile Met Met Tyr Phe Leu Ile Ala Phe Thr Glu Thr Ser						
	325		330			335

Phe Phe Arg Phe Val Ile Leu Phe Pro Val Leu Met Val Ile Met Asp
 340 345 350
 Gln Lys Glu Ala Asn Lys Val Ile Glu Lys Val Ala
 355 360

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 <212> PRT
 <213> Lactococcus lactis

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 Ile Gln Lys Ile Asp Glu Leu Val Arg Asp Gly Glu Ile Glu Asp Asp
 20 25 30
 Val Phe Met Gln Ile Gly Tyr Ser Thr Tyr Glu Pro Lys Tyr Thr Lys
 35 40 45
 Trp Glu Lys Phe Ile Gly Tyr Glu Thr Met Glu Arg Cys Met Asn Glu
 50 55 60
 Ala Ser Thr Ile Ile Thr His Gly Gly Pro Ser Thr Tyr Met Gln Val
 65 70 75 80
 Leu Gln Leu Gly Lys Ile Pro Ile Val Val Pro Arg Gln Met Lys Phe
 85 90 95
 Asp Glu His Ile Asn Asp His Gln Leu Trp Val Ser Lys Gln Val Val
 100 105 110
 Lys Lys Gly Tyr Ser Leu Ile Leu Cys Glu Asp Val Glu Asp Ile Leu
 115 120 125
 Glu Asn Ile Ile Ser Ser Lys Ile Ser Asp Thr Leu Gln Lys Asn Val
 130 135 140
 Asn His Asn Thr Glu Phe Ile Lys Leu Phe Ser Ala Glu Ile Tyr Gln
 145 150 155 160
 Leu Phe Ile Lys Ser Glu Lys Ile
 165

<210> 12
 <211> 2349
 <212> DNA
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<220>
 <221> CDS
 <222> (61)..(1056)

<220>
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 ttg agc gaa aat tta atc agt att ata gta cca gtt tat aat tca gaa 108
 Leu Ser Glu Asn Leu Ile Ser Ile Ile Val Pro Val Tyr Asn Ser Glu
 1 5 10 15
 aag tat tta aga gcg gct att cat agt cta tta aat caa act tat caa 156
 Lys Tyr Leu Arg Ala Ala Ile His Ser Leu Leu Asn Gln Thr Tyr Gln
 20 25 30

aat att gaa gtt att ttg att aat gat ggg tcc act gat ggc tca caa	204
Asn Ile Glu Val Ile Leu Ile Asn Asp Gly Ser Thr Asp Gly Ser Gln	
35 40 45	
gag cta att agc tca ttt caa aaa aag gat aaa aga att aaa tta tat	252
Glu Leu Ile Ser Ser Phe Gln Lys Lys Asp Lys Arg Ile Lys Leu Tyr	
50 55 60	
aat act aaa aat ctg ggg gta tcg cat gcg aga aat tat ggt att gat	300
Asn Thr Lys Asn Leu Gly Val Ser His Ala Arg Asn Tyr Gly Ile Asp	
65 70 75 80	
aga gct agt ggt tcg tat att atg ttt tta gac cca gac gac act tat	348
Arg Ala Ser Gly Ser Tyr Ile Met Phe Leu Asp Pro Asp Asp Thr Tyr	
85 90 95	
gat aaa agt tac tgt tta gaa atg att ggg ttg att aat aag ttt aat	396
Asp Lys Ser Tyr Cys Leu Glu Met Ile Gly Leu Ile Asn Lys Phe Asn	
100 105 110	
gct gat gtt gtt atg agt aat tac tat ata tgc aaa ggc aaa aat ata	444
Ala Asp Val Val Met Ser Asn Tyr Tyr Ile Cys Lys Gly Lys Asn Ile	
115 120 125	
tat cct aat gtt aat aat gat ctt ctt gaa tgt gaa ggc ctc cta tca	492
Tyr Pro Asn Val Asn Asn Asp Leu Leu Glu Cys Glu Gly Leu Leu Ser	
130 135 140	
agg gat aaa aca atg cgt tca ata cta tct gat aca ggt ttt aaa ggg	540
Arg Asp Lys Thr Met Arg Ser Ile Leu Ser Asp Thr Gly Phe Lys Gly	
145 150 155 160	
ttt gta tgg aca aga att ttt aga aaa aat gta att aat aat gtt aaa	588
Phe Val Trp Thr Arg Ile Phe Arg Lys Asn Val Ile Asn Asn Val Lys	
165 170 175	
ttc aat gag agc ata aat tac tta gaa gac atg tta ttt aat att agt	636
Phe Asn Glu Ser Ile Asn Tyr Leu Glu Asp Met Leu Phe Asn Ile Ser	
180 185 190	
att gta cat aat gca aga att ata gcc tat aca aat aaa aga cat tat	684
Ile Val His Asn Ala Arg Ile Ile Ala Tyr Thr Asn Lys Arg His Tyr	
195 200 205	
ttt tat tta caa aga gaa gat tct gca tca aaa aaa ttt agc aaa tct	732
Phe Tyr Leu Gln Arg Glu Asp Ser Ala Ser Lys Lys Phe Ser Lys Ser	
210 215 220	
ttt ttt aaa tcc ctt aat ctt att aga ggg aaa gtt gat cct gaa ttt	780
Phe Phe Lys Ser Leu Asn Leu Ile Arg Gly Lys Val Asp Pro Glu Phe	
225 230 235 240	
tat tcg caa att gat tct gtt att ttt tat aat tta gtt gga tgg tta	828
Tyr Ser Gln Ile Asp Ser Val Ile Phe Tyr Asn Leu Val Gly Trp Leu	
245 250 255	
ata act gag aga aag agt agg gaa aat agt caa ttt ata agg aga aat	876
Ile Thr Glu Arg Lys Ser Arg Glu Asn Ser Gln Phe Ile Arg Arg Asn	
260 265 270	
att aaa aat atg aaa tcc caa gtt aag ttt aaa acg ctt aaa atg gaa	924

Ile Lys Asn Met Lys Ser Gln Val Lys Phe Lys Thr Leu Lys Met Glu	
275 280 285	
aac cca ata aaa aat tta ata tta aaa tta agc tat gct ttt ccc tta	972
Asn Pro Ile Lys Asn Leu Ile Leu Lys Leu Ser Tyr Ala Phe Pro Leu	
290 295 300	
gta gga tcg tgt atg ata cat atg tta tcc gtt ttt atg aaa acc aaa	1020
Val Gly Ser Cys Met Ile His Met Leu Ser Val Phe Met Lys Thr Lys	
305 310 315 320	
ctt tat tcc aaa tta atg agt atg tta agg aaa ggg tgaatcaaaa	1066
Leu Tyr Ser Lys Leu Met Ser Met Leu Arg Lys Gly	
325 330	
acaatattta agataaattt tgggggttaaa accaattctg tgggttggac atacattaaa	1126
tctaaagcat ttttaatgcg agtcttgacc gtgggtcatag gggatttgac ttctaagaat	1186
gttggttaagc attactaacg gagttagaat tttagagagc gtaaaaatattc ttgtgataat	1246
tattaactta tcaagtacag accaaaatac tggaggtttaa caggaactgt tagaatataa	1306
ttttatataa ttaggagtag aataaagag atg aat cca tta ata tca att att	1359
Met Asn Pro Leu Ile Ser Ile Ile	
335 340	
gtt cca ata tac aat gtt gag aag tat att ggt agt tta gta aat tct	1407
Val Pro Ile Tyr Asn Val Glu Lys Tyr Ile Gly Ser Leu Val Asn Ser	
345 350 355	
cta ttg aaa caa acg aac aag aat ttt gag gtt att ttt att gat gac	1455
Leu Leu Lys Gln Thr Asn Lys Asn Phe Glu Val Ile Phe Ile Asp Asp	
360 365 370	
gga tca act gat gaa agc atg caa att ttg aaa gaa ata atg gca ggc	1503
Gly Ser Thr Asp Glu Ser Met Gln Ile Leu Lys Glu Ile Met Ala Gly	
375 380 385	
agt gaa caa gaa ttt tcg ttc aag ttg ttg caa caa gtt aat cag ggt	1551
Ser Glu Gln Glu Phe Ser Phe Lys Leu Leu Gln Val Asn Gln Gly	
390 395 400	
tta tct tca gcc agg aat atc ggt ata ctt aat gca act gga gaa tat	1599
Leu Ser Ser Ala Arg Asn Ile Gly Ile Leu Asn Ala Thr Gly Glu Tyr	
405 410 415 420	
atc ttt ttt ttg gat tca gat gat gaa ata gaa agc aat ttt gtg gag	1647
Ile Phe Phe Leu Asp Ser Asp Asp Glu Ile Glu Ser Asn Phe Val Glu	
425 430 435	
aca att ttg act agt tgc tat aaa tac agt caa ccg gat aca ctt atc	1695
Thr Ile Leu Thr Ser Cys Tyr Lys Tyr Ser Gln Pro Asp Thr Leu Ile	
440 445 450	
ttt gat tat agt agc att gat gaa ttt gga aat gct ttg gac agt aat	1743
Phe Asp Tyr Ser Ser Ile Asp Glu Phe Gly Asn Ala Leu Asp Ser Asn	
455 460 465	
tat ggg cat gga agt att tat cgt caa aaa gat ttg tgt aca agt gag	1791
Tyr Gly His Gly Ser Ile Tyr Arg Gln Lys Asp Leu Cys Thr Ser Glu	

470	475	480	
caa ata tta act gca ttg tct aaa gat gag ata cca aca act gca tgg			1839
Gln Ile Leu Thr Ala Leu Ser Lys Asp Glu Ile Pro Thr Thr Ala Trp			
485	490	495	500
tca ttt gta aca aaa cgc tct gtg att gaa aaa cac gat tta cta ttt			1887
Ser Phe Val Thr Lys Arg Ser Val Ile Glu Lys His Asp Leu Leu Phe			
	505	510	515
tct gtt gga aaa aaa ttt gaa gat aac aat ttt acg ccg aaa gtt ttt			1935
Ser Val Gly Lys Lys Phe Glu Asp Asn Asn Phe Thr Pro Lys Val Phe			
	520	525	530
tac ttt agt aaa aac att gtt gtt att tcc cta aga ttg tat aga tat			1983
Tyr Phe Ser Lys Asn Ile Val Val Ile Ser Leu Arg Leu Tyr Arg Tyr			
	535	540	545
agg aaa cgc tct ggg tct att atg agt aat cgc ccg gaa aaa ttc ttt			2031
Arg Lys Arg Ser Gly Ser Ile Met Ser Asn Arg Pro Glu Lys Phe Phe			
	550	555	560
tcg gac gac gcc att ttt gta aca tat gac tta tta gat ttt tat gat			2079
Ser Asp Asp Ala Ile Phe Val Thr Tyr Asp Leu Leu Asp Phe Tyr Asp			
	565	570	575
cag tat aaa att cgg gaa ttg gga gca gta gtt ggt aaa ata gtt atg			2127
Gln Tyr Lys Ile Arg Glu Leu Gly Ala Val Val Gly Lys Ile Val Met			
	585	590	595
aca aca tta gct tct ttt cca gat tcg aaa aaa ttg tat aat gaa tta			2175
Thr Thr Leu Ala Ser Phe Pro Asp Ser Lys Lys Leu Tyr Asn Glu Leu			
	600	605	610
aat cca atc aga aaa aaa gta ttt aaa gat tat att tca ata gaa aaa			2223
Asn Pro Ile Arg Lys Lys Val Phe Lys Asp Tyr Ile Ser Ile Glu Lys			
	615	620	625
aga cat act aaa cgg ata aaa atg tat gta aaa atg tat gtt ttt tct			2271
Arg His Thr Lys Arg Ile Lys Met Tyr Val Lys Met Tyr Val Phe Ser			
	630	635	640
tct tat gtt gga tat aaa ctt tac aga ctg gta aaa ggt aaa cac tgg			2319
Ser Tyr Val Gly Tyr Lys Leu Tyr Arg Leu Val Lys Gly Lys His Trp			
	645	650	655
aag tgaatataat ttttaatctt atttatg			2349
Lys			

<210> 13

<211> 332

<212> PRT

<213> Lactococcus Lactis

<400> 13

Leu Ser Glu Asn Leu Ile Ser Ile Ile Val Pro Val Tyr Asn Ser Glu
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Lys Tyr Leu Arg Ala Ala Ile His Ser Leu Leu Asn Gln Thr Tyr Gln
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 Asn Ile Glu Val Ile Leu Ile Asn Asp Gly Ser Thr Asp Gly Ser Gln
 35 40 45
 Glu Leu Ile Ser Ser Phe Gln Lys Lys Asp Lys Arg Ile Lys Leu Tyr
 50 55 60
 Asn Thr Lys Asn Leu Gly Val Ser His Ala Arg Asn Tyr Gly Ile Asp
 65 70 75 80
 Arg Ala Ser Gly Ser Tyr Ile Met Phe Leu Asp Pro Asp Asp Thr Tyr
 85 90 95
 Asp Lys Ser Tyr Cys Leu Glu Met Ile Gly Leu Ile Asn Lys Phe Asn
 100 105 110
 Ala Asp Val Val Met Ser Asn Tyr Tyr Ile Cys Lys Gly Lys Asn Ile
 115 120 125
 Tyr Pro Asn Val Asn Asn Asp Leu Leu Glu Cys Glu Gly Leu Leu Ser
 130 135 140
 Arg Asp Lys Thr Met Arg Ser Ile Leu Ser Asp Thr Gly Phe Lys Gly
 145 150 155 160
 Phe Val Trp Thr Arg Ile Phe Arg Lys Asn Val Ile Asn Asn Val Lys
 165 170 175
 Phe Asn Glu Ser Ile Asn Tyr Leu Glu Asp Met Leu Phe Asn Ile Ser
 180 185 190
 Ile Val His Asn Ala Arg Ile Ile Ala Tyr Thr Asn Lys Arg His Tyr
 195 200 205
 Phe Tyr Leu Gln Arg Glu Asp Ser Ala Ser Lys Lys Phe Ser Lys Ser
 210 215 220
 Phe Phe Lys Ser Leu Asn Leu Ile Arg Gly Lys Val Asp Pro Glu Phe
 225 230 235 240
 Tyr Ser Gln Ile Asp Ser Val Ile Phe Tyr Asn Leu Val Gly Trp Leu
 245 250 255
 Ile Thr Glu Arg Lys Ser Arg Glu Asn Ser Gln Phe Ile Arg Arg Asn
 260 265 270
 Ile Lys Asn Met Lys Ser Gln Val Lys Phe Lys Thr Leu Lys Met Glu
 275 280 285
 Asn Pro Ile Lys Asn Leu Ile Leu Lys Leu Ser Tyr Ala Phe Pro Leu
 290 295 300
 Val Gly Ser Cys Met Ile His Met Leu Ser Val Phe Met Lys Thr Lys
 305 310 315 320
 Leu Tyr Ser Lys Leu Met Ser Met Leu Arg Lys Gly
 325 330

<210> 14
 <211> 329
 <212> PRT
 <213> Lactococcus Lactis

<400> 14

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Met Asn Pro Leu Ile Ser Ile Ile Val Pro Ile Tyr Asn Val Glu Lys
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Tyr Ile Gly Ser Leu Val Asn Ser Leu Leu Lys Gln Thr Asn Lys Asn
          20           25           30

Phe Glu Val Ile Phe Ile Asp Asp Gly Ser Thr Asp Glu Ser Met Gln
          35           40           45

Ile Leu Lys Glu Ile Met Ala Gly Ser Glu Gln Glu Phe Ser Phe Lys
          50           55           60

Leu Leu Gln Gln Val Asn Gln Gly Leu Ser Ser Ala Arg Asn Ile Gly
65           70           75           80

Ile Leu Asn Ala Thr Gly Glu Tyr Ile Phe Phe Leu Asp Ser Asp Asp
          85           90           95

Glu Ile Glu Ser Asn Phe Val Glu Thr Ile Leu Thr Ser Cys Tyr Lys
          100          105          110

Tyr Ser Gln Pro Asp Thr Leu Ile Phe Asp Tyr Ser Ser Ile Asp Glu
          115          120          125

Phe Gly Asn Ala Leu Asp Ser Asn Tyr Gly His Gly Ser Ile Tyr Arg
          130          135          140

Gln Lys Asp Leu Cys Thr Ser Glu Gln Ile Leu Thr Ala Leu Ser Lys
145          150          155          160

Asp Glu Ile Pro Thr Thr Ala Trp Ser Phe Val Thr Lys Arg Ser Val
          165          170          175

Ile Glu Lys His Asp Leu Leu Phe Ser Val Gly Lys Lys Phe Glu Asp
          180          185          190

Asn Asn Phe Thr Pro Lys Val Phe Tyr Phe Ser Lys Asn Ile Val Val
          195          200          205

Ile Ser Leu Arg Leu Tyr Arg Tyr Arg Lys Arg Ser Gly Ser Ile Met
          210          215          220

Ser Asn Arg Pro Glu Lys Phe Phe Ser Asp Asp Ala Ile Phe Val Thr
225          230          235          240

Tyr Asp Leu Leu Asp Phe Tyr Asp Gln Tyr Lys Ile Arg Glu Leu Gly
          245          250          255

Ala Val Val Gly Lys Ile Val Met Thr Thr Leu Ala Ser Phe Pro Asp
          260          265          270

Ser Lys Lys Leu Tyr Asn Glu Leu Asn Pro Ile Arg Lys Lys Val Phe
          275          280          285

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Lys Asp Tyr Ile Ser Ile Glu Lys Arg His Thr Lys Arg Ile Lys Met
 290 295 300

Tyr Val Lys Met Tyr Val Phe Ser Ser Tyr Val Gly Tyr Lys Leu Tyr
 305 310 315 320

Arg Leu Val Lys Gly Lys His Trp Lys
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<210> 15

<211> 1612

<212> DNA

<213> Lactococcus lactis

<220>

<221> CDS

<222> (76)..(1488)

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tcgggagggt tatta atg caa atc gca aaa aat tat ctt tat aat gca ata 111
 Met Gln Ile Ala Lys Asn Tyr Leu Tyr Asn Ala Ile
 1 5 10

tat cag gtc ttt ata ata att gtg cca tta ctt acc att cct tat ttg 159
 Tyr Gln Val Phe Ile Ile Ile Val Pro Leu Leu Thr Ile Pro Tyr Leu
 15 20 25

tca aga att ttg ggc cct tca ggt att gga att aac tca tat acc aat 207
 Ser Arg Ile Leu Gly Pro Ser Gly Ile Gly Ile Asn Ser Tyr Thr Asn
 30 35 40

tct att gtt cag tat ttt gtt tta ttt ggt agt ata gga gtc ggt ttg 255
 Ser Ile Val Gln Tyr Phe Val Leu Phe Gly Ser Ile Gly Val Gly Leu
 45 50 55 60

tat ggg aat cgt cag att gcc ttt gtt agg gat aat cag gtc aaa atg 303
 Tyr Gly Asn Arg Gln Ile Ala Phe Val Arg Asp Asn Gln Val Lys Met
 65 70 75

tct aaa gtc ttt tat gaa ata ttt att tta aga cta ttt aca ata tgt 351
 Ser Lys Val Phe Tyr Glu Ile Phe Ile Leu Arg Leu Phe Thr Ile Cys
 80 85 90

tta gca tat ttt ttg ttc gtt gct ttt tta atc att aat ggt cag tat 399
 Leu Ala Tyr Phe Leu Phe Val Ala Phe Leu Ile Ile Asn Gly Gln Tyr
 95 100 105

cat gca tac tat ttg tct caa tcc att gct ata gtt gca gct gca ttt 447
 His Ala Tyr Tyr Leu Ser Gln Ser Ile Ala Ile Val Ala Ala Ala Phe
 110 115 120

gat atc tct tgg ttt ttt atg gga att gaa aat ttt aaa gta act gta 495
 Asp Ile Ser Trp Phe Phe Met Gly Ile Glu Asn Phe Lys Val Thr Val
 125 130 135 140

tta aga aat ttt ata gtt aag tta ctt gct cta ttc agt att ttc cta 543
 Leu Arg Asn Phe Ile Val Lys Leu Leu Ala Leu Phe Ser Ile Phe Leu
 145 150 155

ttt gtc aaa tct tac aat gat ttg aat ata tat ata ttg ata aca gtt	591
Phe Val Lys Ser Tyr Asn Asp Leu Asn Ile Tyr Ile Leu Ile Thr Val	
160 165 170	
tta tct aca tta att ggt aat tta act ttt ttc cca agt tta cac aga	639
Leu Ser Thr Leu Ile Gly Asn Leu Thr Phe Phe Pro Ser Leu His Arg	
175 180 185	
tat ctc gta aag gtt aac tat cgt gaa tta agg cca ata aag cat tta	687
Tyr Leu Val Lys Val Asn Tyr Arg Glu Leu Arg Pro Ile Lys His Leu	
190 195 200	
aag caa tct tta gtc atg ttt atc cca caa att gct gtc caa att tat	735
Lys Gln Ser Leu Val Met Phe Ile Pro Gln Ile Ala Val Gln Ile Tyr	
205 210 215 220	
tgg gtt ttg aat aaa acg atg tta ggt tca ttg gat tct gtc acg agc	783
Trp Val Leu Asn Lys Thr Met Leu Gly Ser Leu Asp Ser Val Thr Ser	
225 230 235	
tcc ggc ttt ttt gat cag tct gat aaa ata gtt aaa ctg gtt ttg gct	831
Ser Gly Phe Phe Asp Gln Ser Asp Lys Ile Val Lys Leu Val Leu Ala	
240 245 250	
att gct act gca aca ggt act gtc atg ttg cca cgt gtt gca aat gcc	879
Ile Ala Thr Ala Thr Gly Thr Val Met Leu Pro Arg Val Ala Asn Ala	
255 260 265	
ttt gca cat aga gag tat agt aaa att aag gaa tac atg tac gca ggt	927
Phe Ala His Arg Glu Tyr Ser Lys Ile Lys Glu Tyr Met Tyr Ala Gly	
270 275 280	
ttt tct ttt gtg tcg gca att tcg att cct atg atg ttt ggt ctg ata	975
Phe Ser Phe Val Ser Ala Ile Ser Ile Pro Met Met Phe Gly Leu Ile	
285 290 295 300	
gct att act cct aaa ttc gtg cca ctt ttt ttt aca tct caa ttt agt	1023
Ala Ile Thr Pro Lys Phe Val Pro Leu Phe Phe Thr Ser Gln Phe Ser	
305 310 315	
gat gtt att cct gtg tta atg atc gag tca atc gca att att ttt ata	1071
Asp Val Ile Pro Val Leu Met Ile Glu Ser Ile Ala Ile Ile Phe Ile	
320 325 330	
gct tgg agc aac gca ata ggt act caa tat ctt tta cca act aat caa	1119
Ala Trp Ser Asn Ala Ile Gly Thr Gln Tyr Leu Leu Pro Thr Asn Gln	
335 340 345	
aat aag tca tat aca gtg tcg gtg atc att gga gcg ata gtc aat tta	1167
Asn Lys Ser Tyr Thr Val Ser Val Ile Ile Gly Ala Ile Val Asn Leu	
350 355 360	
atg tta aat att cca ctg att ata tat cta ggt act gtt ggt gca tca	1215
Met Leu Asn Ile Pro Leu Ile Ile Tyr Leu Gly Thr Val Gly Ala Ser	
365 370 375 380	
att gca act gta att tct gaa atg tct gta act gtg tat caa ctt ttt	1263
Ile Ala Thr Val Ile Ser Glu Met Ser Val Thr Val Tyr Gln Leu Phe	
385 390 395	

ata att cat aaa cag ctt aat ttg cat aca ctg ttt gcg gat tta tct 1311
 Ile Ile His Lys Gln Leu Asn Leu His Thr Leu Phe Ala Asp Leu Ser
 400 405 410

aag tat tta att gca gga tta gtg atg ttt cta att gtc ttt aaa att 1359
 Lys Tyr Leu Ile Ala Gly Leu Val Met Phe Leu Ile Val Phe Lys Ile
 415 420 425

agt ttg tta aca ccg aca tct tgg ata ttc att ctg ttg gaa att act 1407
 Ser Leu Leu Thr Pro Thr Ser Trp Ile Phe Ile Leu Leu Glu Ile Thr
 430 435 440

gtg ggc ata att att tat gtt gtt tta tta ata ttt tta aag gca gaa 1455
 Val Gly Ile Ile Ile Tyr Val Val Leu Leu Ile Phe Leu Lys Ala Glu
 445 450 455 460

ata att aat aag cta aag ttt att atg cat aaa tagaggtatg gatttaggta 1508
 Ile Ile Asn Lys Leu Lys Phe Ile Met His Lys
 465 470

cctgccttat tgaaaataac ggtgagtgcaa tggatttggg catatttgac gctcaccttc 1568

aatttgtttt ggtcgacttg attgtagcac aggacaatat gtct 1612

<210> 16

<211> 471

<212> PRT

<213> Lactococcus lactis

<400> 16

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Ile Ile Ile Val Pro Leu Leu Thr Ile Pro Tyr Leu Ser Arg Ile Leu
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Gly Pro Ser Gly Ile Gly Ile Asn Ser Tyr Thr Asn Ser Ile Val Gln
 35 40 45

Tyr Phe Val Leu Phe Gly Ser Ile Gly Val Gly Leu Tyr Gly Asn Arg
 50 55 60

Gln Ile Ala Phe Val Arg Asp Asn Gln Val Lys Met Ser Lys Val Phe
 65 70 75 80

Tyr Glu Ile Phe Ile Leu Arg Leu Phe Thr Ile Cys Leu Ala Tyr Phe
 85 90 95

Leu Phe Val Ala Phe Leu Ile Ile Asn Gly Gln Tyr His Ala Tyr Tyr
 100 105 110

Leu Ser Gln Ser Ile Ala Ile Val Ala Ala Ala Phe Asp Ile Ser Trp
 115 120 125

Phe Phe Met Gly Ile Glu Asn Phe Lys Val Thr Val Leu Arg Asn Phe
 130 135 140

Ile Val Lys Leu Leu Ala Leu Phe Ser Ile Phe Leu Phe Val Lys Ser
 145 150 155 160

Tyr Asn Asp Leu Asn Ile Tyr Ile Leu Ile Thr Val Leu Ser Thr Leu
 165 170 175
 Ile Gly Asn Leu Thr Phe Phe Pro Ser Leu His Arg Tyr Leu Val Lys
 180 185 190
 Val Asn Tyr Arg Glu Leu Arg Pro Ile Lys His Leu Lys Gln Ser Leu
 195 200 205
 Val Met Phe Ile Pro Gln Ile Ala Val Gln Ile Tyr Trp Val Leu Asn
 210 215 220
 Lys Thr Met Leu Gly Ser Leu Asp Ser Val Thr Ser Ser Gly Phe Phe
 225 230 235 240
 Asp Gln Ser Asp Lys Ile Val Lys Leu Val Leu Ala Ile Ala Thr Ala
 245 250 255
 Thr Gly Thr Val Met Leu Pro Arg Val Ala Asn Ala Phe Ala His Arg
 260 265 270
 Glu Tyr Ser Lys Ile Lys Glu Tyr Met Tyr Ala Gly Phe Ser Phe Val
 275 280 285
 Ser Ala Ile Ser Ile Pro Met Met Phe Gly Leu Ile Ala Ile Thr Pro
 290 295 300
 Lys Phe Val Pro Leu Phe Phe Thr Ser Gln Phe Ser Asp Val Ile Pro
 305 310 315 320
 Val Leu Met Ile Glu Ser Ile Ala Ile Ile Phe Ile Ala Trp Ser Asn
 325 330 335
 Ala Ile Gly Thr Gln Tyr Leu Leu Pro Thr Asn Gln Asn Lys Ser Tyr
 340 345 350
 Thr Val Ser Val Ile Ile Gly Ala Ile Val Asn Leu Met Leu Asn Ile
 355 360 365
 Pro Leu Ile Ile Tyr Leu Gly Thr Val Gly Ala Ser Ile Ala Thr Val
 370 375 380
 Ile Ser Glu Met Ser Val Thr Val Tyr Gln Leu Phe Ile Ile His Lys
 385 390 395 400
 Gln Leu Asn Leu His Thr Leu Phe Ala Asp Leu Ser Lys Tyr Leu Ile
 405 410 415
 Ala Gly Leu Val Met Phe Leu Ile Val Phe Lys Ile Ser Leu Leu Thr
 420 425 430
 Pro Thr Ser Trp Ile Phe Ile Leu Leu Glu Ile Thr Val Gly Ile Ile
 435 440 445
 Ile Tyr Val Val Leu Leu Ile Phe Leu Lys Ala Glu Ile Ile Asn Lys
 450 455 460
 Leu Lys Phe Ile Met His Lys
 465 470

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(57) Abstract: A novel strain of *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremori* ("Ropy 352") has been identified and isolated. Ropy 352 produces a previously unknown exopolysaccharide (EPS 352) that when expressed in or added to milk, imparts highly desirable sensory characteristics to the milk, including making the milk very thick with a creamy mouth feel, and slightly sweet with an

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/03404

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : A23C 9/12; A23G 3/00; A23L 1/222; A01N 25/28, 43/04; A61K 7/06, 7/11, 9/62, 9/36, 31/715; C07H 21/02, 21/04; C12N 1/12, 1/14, 1/16, 1/18, 1/20, 15/00, 15/09, 15/63, 15/70, 15/74, 5/00, 5/02, 5/04, 5/10, 9/00, 9/10; C12P 19/06
 US CL : 435/252.1, 104, 320.1, 252.3, 254.11, 419, 325, 183, 193; 426/34, 654, 658; 536/23.1, 23.2, 23.7, 24.1.

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : Please See Continuation Sheet

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
 Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X — Y	DIERKSEN et al. Expression of Ropy and Muroid Phenotypes in <i>Lactococcus lactis</i> . J. Dairy Science. August 1997, Vol. 80, pages 1528-1536, especially page 1529 Table 1.	1 — 2-4, 8, 12-15, 16-17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27
X — Y	CERNING et al. Isolations and Characterization of Exopolysaccharides from Slime-Forming Mesophilic Lactic Acid Bacteria. J. Dairy Science. 1992, Vol. 75, pages 692-699, especially page 696 Table 5.	2-4 — 8, 12-15, 16-17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27
X,P — Y,P	KNOSHAUG et al. Growth Associated Exopolysaccharide Expression in <i>Lactococcus lactis</i> subspecies cremoris Ropy352. J. Dairy Science. April 2000, Vol. 83, pages 633-640, entire document.	1 — 2-4, 8, 12-15, 16-17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27
Y	STINGELE et al. Introduction of the exopolysaccharide gene cluster from <i>Streptococcus thermophilus</i> Sfi6 into <i>Lactococcus lactis</i> MG1363: production and characterization of an	16-17, 19-21, 23
Y	US 5,955,602 A (FAVRE et al.) 21 September 1999 (21.09.1999), Abstract.	25
Y	US 5,055,455 A (PIER) 08 October 1991 (08.10.1991), Abstract.	27



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T	later documents published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date	*Y	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"L" documents which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*Z	document member of the same patent family
"O" documents referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.

PCT/US01/03404

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)

This international report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claim Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claim Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claim Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of Item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:
Please See Continuation Sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☒ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.: 1-4, 8, 12-17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27-33
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

☐
☐

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International appli No.

PCT/US01/03404

BOX II. OBSERVATIONS WHERE UNITY OF INVENTION IS LACKING

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. In order for all inventions to be examined, the appropriate additional examination fees must be paid.

Group I, claim(s) 1, 13-17, 19-21, drawn to *Lactococcus lactis* subspecies *cremoris* Ropy 352 bacteria, a plasmid isolated from said Ropy bacteria, host cells transformed with said plasmid, methods of making food products using a culture of said bacteria or using said transformed host cells, and said food products.

Group II, claim(s) 2-4, 8, 12, 23, 25, and 27, drawn to Ropy polysaccharides, food products containing said Ropy polysaccharides, pharmaceutical products containing Ropy polysaccharides, beauty care products containing Ropy polysaccharides, and coating agents containing Ropy polysaccharides.

Group III, claim(s) 5-7, 9-11, drawn to methods of thickening a liquid using Ropy polysaccharides.

Group IV, claim(s) 18, drawn to methods of detecting a target nucleic acid using a probe of the Ropy plasmid.

Group V, claim(s) 22, drawn to methods for making a pharmaceutical product using Ropy polysaccharides.

Group VI, claim(s) 24, drawn to methods for making a beauty care product using Ropy polysaccharides.

Group VII, claim(s) 26, drawn to methods for making a coating agent using Ropy polysaccharides.

Group VIII, claim(s) 28-33, drawn to purified proteins related to SEQ ID NO:9, encoding nucleic acid molecules, host cells, and transgenic bacteria.

Group IX, claim(s) 28-33, drawn to purified proteins related to SEQ ID NO:10, encoding nucleic acid molecules, host cells, and transgenic bacteria.

Group X, claim(s) 28-33, drawn to purified proteins related to SEQ ID NO:13, encoding nucleic acid molecules, host cells, and transgenic bacteria.

Group XI, claim(s) 28-33, drawn to purified proteins related to SEQ ID NO:14, encoding nucleic acid molecules, host cells, and transgenic bacteria.

Group XII, claim(s) 28-33, drawn to purified proteins related to SEQ ID NO:16, encoding nucleic acid molecules, host cells, and transgenic bacteria.

Group XIII, claim(s) 34, drawn to methods of producing a protein related to SEQ ID NO:9.

Group XIV, claim(s) 34, drawn to methods of producing a protein related to SEQ ID NO:10.

Group XV, claim(s) 34, drawn to methods of producing a protein related to SEQ ID NO:13.

Group XVI, claim(s) 34, drawn to methods of producing a protein related to SEQ ID NO:14.

Group XVII, claim(s) 34, drawn to methods of producing a protein related to SEQ ID NO:16.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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The inventions listed as Groups I-XVII do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons.

The special technical feature of Group I is the Ropy 352 bacterium. This special technical feature, or a corresponding special technical feature, is found also found in the other products in Group I. The Ropy plasmid of Claim 16 is a requisite component of the Ropy bacterium, the transformed host cells contain said Ropy plasmid, and the food products contain either the Ropy bacteria or host cells containing the Ropy plasmid. Also grouped with these corresponding products is the first recited invention in another category as set forth in 37 CFR 1.475, that is the first method of using the product of the first invention (Claim 13) which is a method of making a food product using a culture of Ropy bacteria or a host cell transformed with the Ropy plasmid.

Group IV, Claim 18, is a second method of using the product(s) of the main invention. Only the first invention in additional categories are grouped with the main invention. Thus, Groups I and IV do not share unity on invention.

Group II, drawn to the Ropy polysaccharides, do not share the same or corresponding special technical feature as the bacterium and plasmids of Group I. While the polysaccharides are disclosed as being biosynthesized by the bacteria, particularly by the genes located on the plasmids, the compounds themselves have wholly different structures. Bacteria are organisms while polysaccharides are small organic molecules; plasmids contain genes which encode proteins while polysaccharides are a food source. The products in the Groups also have wholly different functions. Said functions are particularly evident in the different method claims. Thus, Groups I and II do not share unity of invention.

Groups III, V, VI, and VII are drawn to methods using Ropy polysaccharides, Group II; however, the Ropy polysaccharides of Group II are not the main invention (see above). Additional categories of inventions as set forth in 37 CFR 1.475 are only grouped with the main invention. Therefore, each new method (new category) using an invention which is not the main invention, is set apart from the other methods. Thus, Groups III, V, VI, and VII lack unity of invention with Group II. Moreover, Groups III, V, VI, and VII do not share unity of invention with Group I for the reasons cited above for Group II.

Each of Groups VIII-XII are drawn to genera of proteins, encoding nucleic acids, host cells, and transgenic bacteria relating to distinct proteins, namely SEQ ID NOs: 9, 10, 13, 14, or 16. These products lack unity with each other because each distinct protein has a different structure (linear sequence) and function (catalyzing a different reaction). While it may be true that each of these five proteins participate in a biosynthetic pathway for the production of Ropy polysaccharide, it is certainly true that these proteins perform their catalytic function independent of the other proteins. Therefore, Groups VIII-XII do not share unity with each other.

Groups VIII-XII are drawn to genera encompassing proteins having at least 60% identity to the noted sequences (see Claim 28, item c); this includes numerous sequences, most of which are not encompassed by the Ropy bacterium or the Ropy plasmid. Moreover, the special technical features of each of the proteins, namely their particular structures and functions from which their usefulness is drawn, are not the same as the entire Ropy bacteria or the entire plasmid which make entire Ropy polysaccharides. Therefore, Groups VIII-XII do not share unity of invention with Group I.

Groups XIII-XVII are drawn to methods using making the proteins of Groups VIII-XII; however, the proteins of Groups VIII-XII are not the main invention (see above). Additional categories of inventions as set forth in 37 CFR 1.475 are only grouped with the main invention. Therefore, each method (category) using an invention which is not the main invention, is set apart from the other methods. Thus, Groups XIII-XVII lack unity of invention with Groups VIII-XII. Groups XIII-XVII do not share unity of invention with Group I for the reasons cited above for the proteins of Groups VIII-XII.

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 1:

435/252.1, 104, 320.1, 252.3, 254.11, 419, 325, 183, 193; 426/34, 654, 658; 536/23.1, 23.2, 23.7, 24.1, 24.2, 24.32; 424/418, 461, 479, 70.13; 514/54

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International applic. No.

PCT/US01/03404

CAPLUS

search terms: polysaccharide, ropy, cremoris, 352, exopolysaccharide, lactococcus